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# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR, BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF MY LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS;

AND

TWO LAY SERMONS;

I.—THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL.

II.—BLESSED ARE YE THAT SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS.

BY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE,

AUTHOR OF "THE FRIEND, A SERIES OF ESSAYS," ETC. ETC.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL AND SONS, YORK STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.

1884.

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This Volume is a verbatim reprint of the original editions of Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria" (1817); "The Statesman's Manual," a Lay Sermon (1816); and "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters," a Lay Sermon (1817). These editions have long been out of print, and are now quite scarce.

1878

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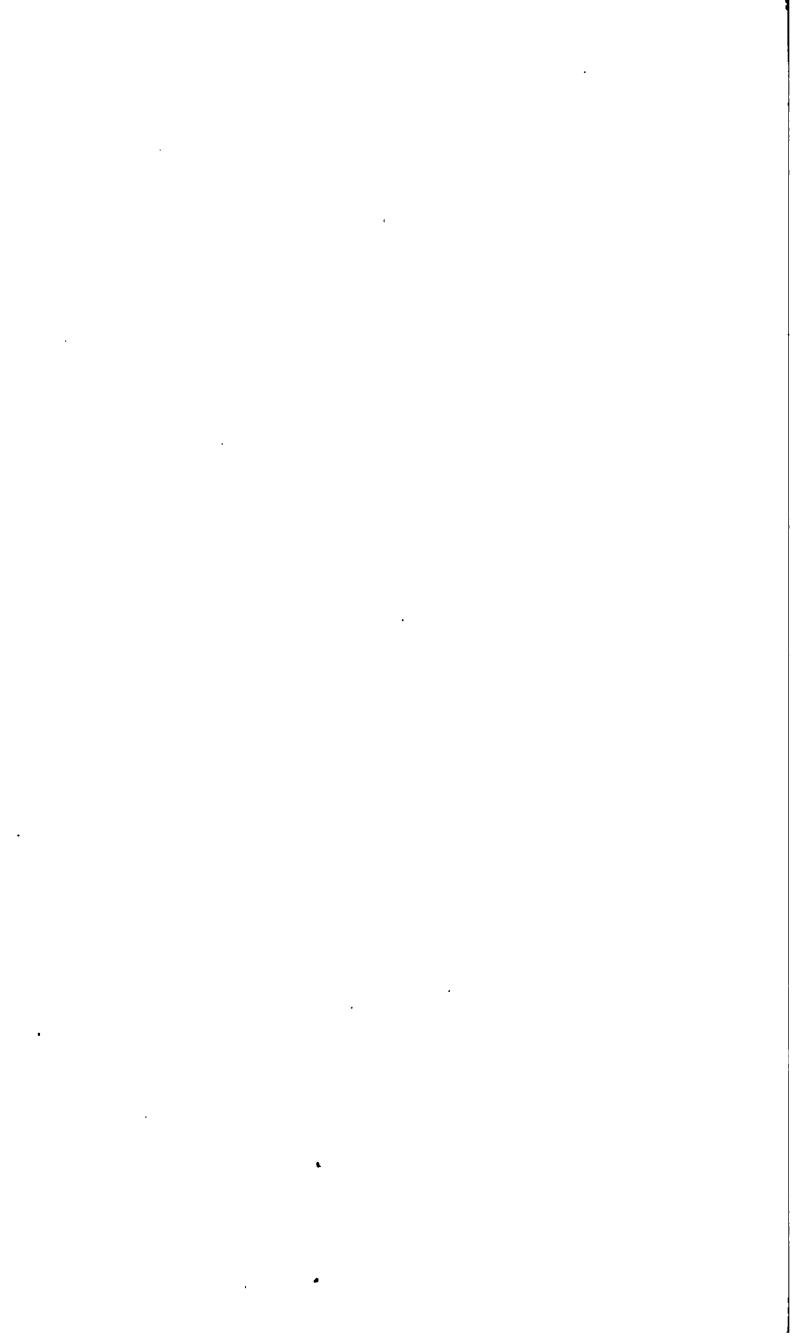
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# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR,

*BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES*

OF

MY LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS.

BY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

LONDON.

1817.

So wenig er auch bestimmt seyn mag, andere zu belehren, so wünscht er doch sich denen mitzutheilen, die er sich gleichgesinnt weiss, oder hofft, deren Anzahl aber in der Breite der Welt zerstreut ist: er wünscht sein Verhältniss zu den ältesten Freunden dadurch wieder anzuknüpfen, mit neuen es fortzusetzen, und in der letzten generation sich wieder andere für seine übrige Lebenszeit zu gewinnen. Er wünscht der Jugend die Umwege zu ersparen, auf denen er sich selbst verirrt.

GÖETHE.

TRANSLATION.—Little call as he may have to instruct others, he wishes nevertheless to open out his heart to such as he either knows or hopes to be of like mind with himself, but who are widely scattered in the world: he wishes to knit anew his connections with his oldest friends, to continue those recently formed, and to win other friends among the rising generation for the remaining course of his life. He wishes to spare the young those circuitous paths on which he himself had lost his way.

# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.

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## CHAPTER I.

The motives of the present work—Reception of the Author's first publication—The discipline of his taste at school—The effect of contemporary writers on youthful minds—Bowles's Sonnets—Comparison between the poets before and since Pope.

IT has been my lot to have had my name introduced, both in conversation and in print, more frequently than I find it easy to explain, whether I consider the fewness, unimportance, and limited circulation of my writings, or the retirement and distance in which I have lived, both from the literary and political world. Most often it has been connected with some charge which I could not acknowledge, or some principle which I had never entertained. Nevertheless, had I had no other motive or incitement, the reader would not have been troubled with this exculpation. What my additional purposes were will be seen in the following pages. It will be found that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally. I have used the narration chiefly for the purpose of giving a continuity to the work, in part for the sake of the miscellaneous reflections suggested to me by particular events; but still more as introductory to the statement of my principles in Politics, Religion and Philosophy, and the application of the rules, deduced from philosophical principles, to poetry and criticism. But of the objects which I proposed to myself, it was not the least important to effect, as far as possible, a settlement of the long-continued controversy concerning the true nature of poetic diction, and at the same time to define with the utmost impartiality the real poetic character of the poet, by whose writings this controversy was first kindled, and has been since fuelled and fanned.

In 1794, when I had barely passed the verge of manhood, I published a small volume of juvenile poems.\* They were received with a degree of favour which, young as I was, I well knew was

\* This is evidently a slip of the memory; Coleridge's first volume, a small 12mo. was published in 1796. The title is "Poems on various subjects, by S. T. Coleridge, late of Jesus College, Cambridge. London, Printed for G. G. and J. Robinsons, and J. Cottle Bookseller, Bristol. 1796."

bestowed on them not so much for any positive merit, as because they were considered buds of hope and promises of better works to come. The critics of that day, the most flattering equally with the severest, concurred in objecting to them obscurity, a general turgidness of diction, and a profusion of new-coined double epithets.\* The first is the fault which a writer is the least able to detect in his own compositions; and my mind was not then sufficiently disciplined to receive the authority of others as a substitute for my own conviction. Satisfied that the thoughts, such as they were, could not have been expressed otherwise, or at least more perspicuously, I forgot to inquire whether the thoughts themselves did not demand a degree of attention unsuitable to the nature and objects of poetry. This remark, however, applies chiefly, though not exclusively, to the "Religious Musings." The remainder of the charge I admitted to its full extent, and not without sincere acknowledgments to both my private and public censors for their friendly admonitions. In the after editions I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction; though, in truth, these parasite plants of youthful poetry had insinuated themselves into my longer poems with such intricacy of union, that I was often obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower. From that period to the date of the present work I have published nothing with my name which could by any possibility have come before the board of anonymous criticism. Even the three or four poems, printed with the works of a friend, as far as they were censured at all, were charged with the same or similar defects, though I am persuaded, not with equal justice; with an excess of ornament, in addition to strained and elaborate diction.† May I be permitted to add, that, even at the

\* The authority of Milton and Shakespeare may be usefully pointed out to young authors. In the *Comus*, and earlier poems of Milton there is a superfluity of double epithets; while in the *Paradise Lost* we find very few, in the *Paradise Regained* scarce any. The same remark holds almost equally true, of the *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo* and *Juliet*, *Venus* and *Adonis*, and *Lucrece*, compared with the *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet* of our great Dramatist. The rule for the admission of double epithets seems to be this: either that they should be already denizens of our language, such as *blood-stained*, *terror-stricken*, *self-applauding*; or when a new epithet, or one found in books only, is hazarded, that it, at least, be one word, not two words made one by mere virtue of the printer's hyphen. A language which, like the English, is almost without

cases, is indeed in its very genius unfitted for compounds. If a writer, every time a compounded word suggests itself to him, would seek for some other mode of expressing the same sense, the chances are always greatly in favour of his finding a better word. "*Tanquam scopulum sic vitæ insolens verbum*," is the wise advice of Cæsar to the Roman Orators, and the precept applies with double force to the writers in our own language. But it must not be forgotten, that the same Cæsar wrote a grammatical treatise for the purpose of reforming the ordinary language by bringing it to a greater accordance with the principles of logic or universal grammar.

† Vide the criticisms on the *Ancient Mariner* in the *Monthly and Critical Reviews* of the first volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*.

early period of my juvenile poems, I saw and admitted the superiority of an austerer and more natural style, with an insight not less clear than I at present possess. My judgment was stronger than were my powers of realizing its dictates, and the faults of my language, though indeed partly owing to a wrong choice of subjects, and the desire of giving a poetic colouring to abstract and metaphysical truths, in which a new world then seemed to open upon me, did yet, in part likewise, originate in unfeigned diffidence of my own comparative talent. During several years of my youth and early manhood, I revered those who had re-introduced the manly simplicity of the Grecian, and of our own elder poets, with such enthusiasm, as made the hope seem presumptuous of writing successfully in the same style. Perhaps a similar process has happened to others; but my earliest poems were marked by an ease and simplicity, which I have studied, perhaps with inferior success, to impress on my later compositions.

At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master.\* He early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again of Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius (in such extracts as I then read), Terence, and, above all, the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the so-called silver and brazen ages, but with even those of the Augustan era; and, on grounds of plain sense and universal logic, to see and assert the superiority of the former, in the truth and nativeness both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek Tragic Poets, he made us read Shakespeare and Milton as lessons; and they were the lessons, too, which required most time and trouble to *bring up*, so as to escape his censure. I learnt from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own as severe as that of science, and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more and more fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember that, availing himself of the synonymes to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, why it would not have answered the same purpose, and wherein consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

In our own English compositions (at least for the last three years of our school education) he showed no mercy to phrase,

\* The Rev. James Bowyer, many years Head Master of Christ's Hospital.

metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. Lute, harp, and lyre, muse, muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hippocrene, were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming, "*Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, muse? Your Nurse's daughter you mean! Pierian spring? Oh, ay! the cloister-pump, I suppose!*" Nay, certain introductions, similes, and examples were placed by name on a list of interdiction. Among the similes there was, I remember, that of the manchineel fruit, as suiting equally well with too many subjects, in which, however, it yielded the palm at once to the example of Alexander and Clytus, which was equally good and apt whatever might be the theme. Was it ambition? Alexander and Clytus! Flattery? Alexander and Clytus! Anger? Drunkenness? Pride? Friendship? Ingratitude? Late repentance? Still, still Alexander and Clytus! At length the praises of agriculture having been exemplified in the sagacious observation, that, had Alexander been holding the plough, he would not have run his friend Clytus through with a spear; this tried and serviceable old friend was banished by public edict in *secula seculorum*. I have sometimes ventured to think that a list of this kind, or an *index expurgatorius* of certain well known and ever returning phrases, both introductory and transitional, including the large assortment of modest egotisms and flattering illeisms, &c., &c., might be hung up in our law courts and both Houses of Parliament, with great advantage to the public as an important saving of national time, an incalculable relief to his Majesty's ministers; but, above all, as insuring the thanks of country attorneys and their clients, who have private bills to carry through the House.

Be this as it may, there was one custom of our master's, which I cannot pass over in silence, because I think it imitable and worthy of imitation. He would often permit our theme exercises, under some pretext of want of time, to accumulate, till each lad had four or five to be looked over. Then placing the whole number *abreast* on his desk, he would ask the writer why this or that sentence might not have found as appropriate a place under this or that other thesis; and if no satisfying answer could be returned, and two faults of the same kind were found in one exercise, the irrevocable verdict followed, the exercise was torn up, and another on the same subject to be produced, in addition to the tasks of the day. The reader will, I trust, excuse this tribute of recollection to a man, whose severities, even now, not seldom



furnish the dreams by which the blind fancy would fain interpret to the mind the painful sensations of distempered sleep; but neither lessen nor dim the deep sense of my moral and intellectual obligations. He sent us to the University excellent Latin and Greek scholars, and tolerable Hebraists. Yet our classical knowledge was the least of the good gifts which we derived from his zealous and conscientious tutorage. He is now gone to his final reward, full of years and full of honours, even of those honours which were dearest to his heart, as gratefully bestowed by that school, and still binding him to the interests of that school in which he had been himself educated, and to which during his whole life he was a dedicated thing.

From causes which this is not the place to investigate, no models of past times, however perfect, can have the same vivid effect on the youthful mind, as the productions of contemporary genius. The discipline my mind had undergone "*Ne falleretur rotundo sono et versuum cursu, cincinnis et floribus; sed ut inspiceret quidnam subesset, quæ sedes, quod firmamentum, quis fundus verbis; an figuræ essent mera ornatura et orationis fucus: vel sanguinis e materiæ ipsius corde effluentis rubor quidam natus et incalescentia genuina;*" removed all obstacles to the appreciation of excellence in style without diminishing my delight. That I was thus prepared for the perusal of Mr. Bowles's sonnets and earlier poems, at once increased *their* influence and *my* enthusiasm. The great works of past ages seem to a young man things of another race, in respect to which his faculties must remain passive and submissive, even as to the stars and mountains. But the writings of a contemporary, perhaps not many years older than himself, surrounded by the same circumstances, and disciplined by the same manners, possess a reality for him, and inspire an actual friendship as of a man for a man. His very admiration is the wind which fans and feeds his hope. The poems themselves assume the properties of flesh and blood. To recite, to extol, to contend for them is but the payment of a debt due to one, who exists to receive it.

There are indeed modes of teaching which have produced, and are producing, youths of a very different stamp; modes of teaching, in comparison with which we have been called on to despise our great public schools, and universities,

"in whose halls are hung  
Armoury of the invincible knights of old"—

modes, by which children are to be metamorphosed into prodigies. And prodigies with a vengeance have I known thus produced!

Prodigies of self-conceit, shallowness, arrogance, and infidelity. Instead of storing the memory during the period when the memory is the predominant faculty, with facts for the after exercise of the judgment; and instead of awakening by the noblest models the fond and unmixed love and admiration which is the natural and graceful temper of early youth, these nurslings of improved pedagogy are taught to dispute and decide; to suspect all, but their own and their lecturer's wisdom; and to hold nothing sacred from their contempt but their own contemptible arrogance: boy-graduates in all the technicals, and in all the dirty passions and impudence of anonymous criticism. To such dispositions alone can the admonition of Pliny be requisite, "*Neque enim debet operibus ejus obesse, quod vivit. An si inter eos, quos nunquam vidimus, floruisse non solum libros ejus, verum etiam imagines conquireremus, ejusdem nunc honor præsentis, et gratia quasi satietate languescet? At hoc prævum, malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, complecti, nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit.*" Plin. Epist. Lib. I.

I had just entered on my seventeenth year, when the sonnets of Mr. Bowles, twenty in number, and just then published in a quarto pamphlet, were first made known and presented to me by a schoolfellow, who had quitted us for the University, and who during the whole time that he was in our first form (or in our school language a Grecian), had been my patron and protector. I refer to Dr. Middleton, the truly learned, and every way excellent Bishop of Calcutta:

"Qui laudibus amplis

*Ingenium celebrare meum, calamumque solebat,  
Calcar agens animo validum. Non omnia terras  
Obruta! Vivit amor, vivit dolor! Ora negatur  
Dulcia conspiceret; at flere et meminisse\* relictum est."*

Petr. Ep. Lib. I. Ep. I.

It was a double pleasure to me, and still remains a tender recollection, that I should have received from a friend so revered the first knowledge of a poet, by whose works, year after year, I was so enthusiastically delighted and inspired. My earliest acquaintances will not have forgotten the undisciplined eagerness and impetuous zeal with which I laboured to make proselytes, not only of my companions, but of all with whom I conversed, of whatever rank, and in whatever place. As my school finances di-

\* I am most happy to have the necessity of informing the reader, that since this passage was written, the report of Dr. Middleton's death on his voyage to India has been proved erroneous. He lives and long may

he live; for I dare prophecy, that with his life only will his exertions for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his fellow men be limited. [1817.]

not permit me to purchase copies, I made, within less than a year, and a half, more than forty transcriptions, as the best presents I could offer to those who had in any way won my regard. And with almost equal delight did I receive the three or four following publications of the same author.

Though I have seen and known enough of mankind to be well aware that I shall perhaps stand alone in my creed, and that it will be well if I subject myself to no worse charge than that of singularity; I am not, therefore, deterred from avowing that I regard, and ever have regarded the obligations of intellect among the most sacred of the claims of gratitude. A valuable thought, or a particular train of thoughts, gives me additional pleasure when I can safely refer and attribute it to the conversation or correspondence of another. My obligations to Mr. Bowles were indeed important, and for radical good. At a very premature age, even before my fifteenth year, I had bewildered myself in metaphysics, and in theological controversy. Nothing else pleased me. History, and particular facts, lost all interest in my mind. Poetry (though for a schoolboy of that age I was above par in English versification, and had already produced two or three compositions which, I may venture to say, without reference to my age, were somewhat above mediocrity, and which had gained me more credit than the sound good sense of my old master was at all pleased with) poetry itself, yea novels and romances, became insipid to me. In my friendless wanderings on our leave-days\* (for I was an orphan, and had scarce any connections in London), highly was I delighted if any passenger, especially if he were dressed in black, would enter into conversation with me. For I soon found the means of directing it to my favourite subjects

“ Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,  
Fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,  
And found no end in wandering mazes lost.”

This preposterous pursuit was, beyond doubt, injurious, both to my natural powers, and to the progress of my education. It would, perhaps, have been destructive had it been continued; but from this I was auspiciously withdrawn, partly, indeed, by an accidental introduction to an amiable family, chiefly, however, by the genial influence of a style of poetry, so tender and yet so manly, so natural and real, and yet so dignified and harmonious, as the sonnets, &c., of Mr. Bowles! Well were it for me, perhaps,

\* The Christ's Hospital phrase, not for holidays altogether, but for those on which the

boys are permitted to go beyond the precincts of the school.

had I never relapsed into the same mental disease; if I had continued to pluck the flower and reap the harvest from the cultivated surface, instead of delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths. But if in after time I have sought a refuge from bodily pain and mismanaged sensibility in abstruse researches, which exercised the strength and subtlety of the understanding without awakening the feelings of the heart, still there was a long and blessed interval, during which my natural faculties were allowed to expand, and my original tendencies to develop themselves; my fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds.

The second advantage, which I owe to my early perusal and admiration of these poems (to which, let me add, though known to me at a somewhat later period, the Lewesdon Hill of Mr. Crowe), bears more immediately on my present subject. Among those with whom I conversed, there were, of course, very many who had formed their taste and their notions of poetry from the writings of Pope and his followers; or, to speak more generally, in that school of French poetry, condensed and invigorated by English understanding, which had predominated from the last century. I was not blind to the merits of this school; yet, as from inexperience of the world, and consequent want of sympathy with the general subjects of these poems, they gave me little pleasure, I doubtless undervalued the kind, and, with the presumption of youth, withheld from its masters the legitimate name of poets. I saw that the excellence of this kind consisted in just and acute observations on men and manners in an artificial state of society, as its matter and substance; and, in the logic of wit, conveyed in smooth and strong epigrammatic couplets as its form. Even when the subject was addressed to the fancy or the intellect, as in the Rape of the Lock, or the Essay on Man; nay, when it was a consecutive narration, as in that astonishing product of matchless talent and ingenuity, Pope's Translation of the Iliad; still a point was looked for at the end of each second line, and the whole was as it were a sorites, or, if I may exchange a logical for a grammatical metaphor, a conjunction disjunctive of epigrams. Meantime the matter and diction seemed to me characterized not so much by poetic thoughts, as by thoughts translated into the language of poetry. On this last point I had occasion to render my own thoughts gradually more and more plain to myself by frequent amicable disputes concerning Darwin's Botanic Garden, which for some years was greatly extolled, not only by the reading public in general, but even by those whose genius and natural robustness

of understanding enabled them afterwards to act foremost in dissipating these "painted mists" that occasionally rise from the marshes at the foot of Parnassus. During my first Cambridge vacation I assisted a friend in a contribution for a literary society in Devonshire, and in this I remember to have compared Darwin's work to the Russian palace of ice, glittering, cold, and transitory. In the same essay, too, I assigned sundry reasons, chiefly drawn from a comparison of passages in the Latin poets with the original Greek from which they were borrowed, for the preference of Collins's odes to those of Gray, and of the simile in Shakespeare:

"How like a younker or a prodigal  
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!  
How like the prodigal doth she return,  
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!"

to the imitation in the bard:

"Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows  
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm  
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,  
YOUTH at the prow and PLEASURE at the helm,  
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,  
That hush'd in grim repose, expects its evening prey."

(In which, by-the-by, the words "realm" and "sway" are rhymes dearly purchased.) I preferred the original on the ground that, in the imitation, it depended wholly in the compositor's putting, or not putting, a small capital both in this and in many other passages of the same poet, whether the words should be personifications or mere abstracts. I mention this because, in referring various lines in Gray to their original in Shakespeare and Milton—and in the clear perception how completely all the propriety was lost in the transfer—I was, at that early period, led to a conjecture which, many years afterwards, was recalled to me from the same thought having been started in conversation, but far more ably, and developed more fully, by Mr. Wordsworth, namely, that this style of poetry, which I have characterised above as translations of prose thoughts into poetic language, had been kept up by, if it did not wholly arise from, the custom of writing Latin verses, and the great importance attached to these exercises in our public schools. Whatever might have been the case in the fifteenth century, when the use of the Latin tongue was so general among learned men, that Erasmus is said to have forgotten his native language; yet in the present day it is not to be supposed that a youth can think in Latin, or that he can have any other reliance

on the force or fitness of his phrases but the authority of the author from whence he has adopted them. Consequently he must first prepare his thoughts, and then pick out from Virgil, Horace, Ovid, or perhaps more compendiously, from his "*Gradus*,"\* halves and quarters of lines in which to embody them.

I never object to a certain degree of disputatiousness in a young man from the age of seventeen to that of four or five and twenty, provided I find him always arguing on one side of the question. The controversies, occasioned by my unfeigned zeal for the honour of a favourite contemporary, then known to me only by his works, were of great advantage in the formation and establishment of my taste and critical opinions. In my defence of the lines running into each other, instead of closing at each couplet; and of natural language, neither bookish nor vulgar, neither redolent of the lamp or of the kennel, such as *I will remember thee*; instead of the same thought tricked up in the rag-fair finery of

——— "Thy image on her wing  
Before my fancy's eye shall memory bring."

I had continually to adduce the metre and diction of the Greek poets from Homer to Theocritus inclusive; and still more of our elder English poets from Chaucer to Milton. Nor was this all. But as it was my constant reply to authorities brought against me from later poets of great name, that no authority could avail in opposition to truth, nature, logic, and the laws of universal grammar; actuated too by my former passion for metaphysical investigations, I laboured at a solid foundation, on which permanently to ground my opinions, in the component faculties of the human mind itself, and their comparative dignity and importance. According to the faculty or source from which the pleasure given by any poem or passage was derived, I estimated the merit of such poem or passage. As the result of all my reading and meditation, I abstracted two critical aphorisms, deeming them to comprise the conditions and *criteria* of poetic style; first, that not the poem which we have read, but that to which we return, with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power and claims the name of essential poetry. Second, that whatever

\* In the *Nutricia* of Politian there occurs this line:—

*"Pura coloratos interstrepit unda lapillos."*

Casting my eye on a University prize-poem, I met this line:—

*"Lactea purpureos interstrepit unda lapillos."*

Now look out in the "*Gradus*" for *purus*, and you find as the first synonyme, *lacteus*; for *coloratus*, and the first synonyme is *purpureus*. I mention this by way of elucidating one of the most ordinary processes in the *ferrumination* of these centos.

lines can be translated into other words of the same language, without diminution of their significance, either in sense or association, or in any worthy feeling, are so far vicious in their diction. Be it, however, observed, that I excluded from the list of worthy feelings the pleasure derived from mere novelty in the reader, and the desire of exciting wonderment at his powers in the author. Oftentimes since then, in perusing French tragedies, I have fancied two marks of admiration at the end of each line, as hieroglyphics of the author's own admiration at his own cleverness. Our genuine admiration of a great poet is a continuous under-current of feeling; it is everywhere present, but seldom anywhere as a separate excitement. I was wont boldly to affirm that it would be scarcely more difficult to push a stone out from the pyramids with the bare hand, than to alter a word, or the position of a word, in Milton or Shakespeare (in their most important works at least) without making the author say something else, or something worse, than he does say. One great distinction I appeared to myself to see plainly, between even the characteristic faults of our elder poets and the false beauties of the moderns. In the former, from Donne to Cowley, we find the most fantastic out-of-the-way thoughts, but in the most pure and genuine mother English; in the latter, the most obvious thoughts, in language the most fantastic and arbitrary. Our faulty elder poets sacrificed the passion, and passionate flow of poetry, to the subtleties of intellect and to the starts of wit; the moderns to the glare and glitter of a perpetual yet broken and heterogeneous imagery, or rather to an amphibious something, made up, half of image and half of abstract\* meaning. The one sacrificed the heart to the head, the other both heart and head to point and drapery.

The reader must make himself acquainted with the general style of composition that was at that time deemed poetry, in order to understand and account for the effect produced on me by the Sonnets, the Monody at Matlock, and the Hope, of Mr. Bowles; for it is peculiar to original genius to become less and less striking, in proportion to its success in improving the taste and judgment of its contemporaries. The poems of West, indeed, had the merit of chaste and manly diction, but they were cold, and, if I may so express it, only dead-coloured; while in the best of Warton's there is a stiffness, which too often gives them the appearance of imitations from the Greek. Whatever relation,

\* I remember a ludicrous instance in the poem of a young tradesman;

"No more will I endure love's pleasing pain,  
Or round my heart's leg tie his galling chain."

therefore, if cause or impulse Percy's collection of Ballads may bear to the most popular poems of the present day, yet in the more sustained and elevated style of the then living poets Bowles and Cowper\* were, to the best of my knowledge, the first who combined natural thoughts with natural diction; the first who reconciled the heart with the head.

It is true, as I have before mentioned, that from diffidence in my own powers, I for a short time adopted a laborious and florid diction, which I myself deemed, if not absolutely vicious, yet of very inferior worth. Gradually, however, my practice conformed to my better judgment, and the compositions of my twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth years (for example, the shorter blank verse poems, the lines which are now adopted in the introductory part of the Vision in the present collection in Mr. Southey's Joan of Arc, 2nd book, 1st edition, and the Tragedy of Remorse) are not more below my present ideal in respect of the general tissue of the style than those of the latest date. Their faults were at least a remnant of the former leaven, and among the many who have done me the honour of putting my poems in the same class with those of my betters, the one or two who have pretended to bring examples of affected simplicity from my volume, have been able to adduce but one instance, and that out of a copy of verses half ludicrous, half splenetic, which I intended, and had myself characterised, as *sermoni propiora*.

Every reform, however necessary, will by weak minds be carried to an excess, that itself will need reforming. The reader will excuse me for noticing that I myself was the first to expose *risu honesto* the three sins of poetry, one or the other of which is the most likely to beset a young writer. So long ago as the publication of the second number of the Monthly Magazine, under the name of Nehemiah Higginbottom I contributed three sonnets, the first of which had for its object to excite a good-natured laugh at the spirit of doleful egotism, and at the recurrence of favourite phrases, with the double defect of being at once trite and licentious. The second on low, creeping language and thoughts, under the pretence of simplicity. And the third, the phrases of which were borrowed entirely from my own poems, on the in-

\* Cowper's Task was published some time before the Sonnets of Mr. Bowles; but I was not familiar with it till many years afterwards. The vein of satire which runs through that excellent poem, together with the sombre hue of its religious opinions, would probably, at that time, have prevented its laying any strong hold on my affections. The love of nature seems to have led Thomson to a cheer-

ful religion; and a gloomy religion to have led Cowper to a love of nature. The one would carry his fellow-men along with him into nature: the other flies to nature from his fellow-men. In chastity of diction however, and the harmony of blank verse, Cowper leaves Thomson unmeasurably below him; yet still I feel the latter to have been the born poet.



discriminate use of elaborate and swelling language and imagery. The reader will find them in the note\* below., and will I trust regard them as reprinted for biographical purposes, and not for their poetic merits. So general at that time, and so decided was the opinion concerning the characteristic vices of my style, that a celebrated physician (now, alas! no more), speaking of me in other respects with his usual kindness to a gentleman who was about to meet me at a dinner party, could not, however, resist giving him a hint not to mention the "*House that Jack built*" in my presence, for "that I was as sore as a boil about that sonnet," he not knowing that I was myself the author of it.

\* SONNET I.

PENSIVE at eve, on the hard world I mused,  
And my poor heart was sad; so at the moon  
I gazed and sighed, and sighed: for ah how  
soon

Eve saddens into night! mine eyes perused  
With tearful vacancy the dampy grass  
That wept and glittered in the paly ray:  
And I did pause me, on my lonely way  
And mused me, on the wretched ones that pass  
O'er the bleak heath of sorrow. But alas!  
Most of myself I thought! when it befel,  
That the soothe spirit of the breezy wood  
Breathed in mine ear: "All this is very well,  
But much of one thing is for no thing good."  
Oh my poor heart's inexplicable swell!

SONNET II.

OH I do love thee, meek Simplicity!  
For of thy lays the lulling simpleness  
Goes to my heart and soothes each small dis-  
tress,

Distress though small, yet haply great to me.  
'Tis true on Lady Fortune's gentlest pad  
I amble on; and yet I know not why  
So sad I am; but should a friend and I  
Frown, pout and part, then I am very sad.  
And then with sonnets and with sympathy  
My dreamy bosom's mystic woes I pall;  
Now of my false friend plaining plaintively,  
Now raving at mankind in general;  
But whether sad or fierce, 'tis simple all,  
All very simple, meek Simplicity!

SONNET III.

AND this reft house is that, the which he  
built,  
Lamented Jack! and here his malt he piled,  
Cautious in vain! these rats that squeak so  
wild,  
Squeak not unconscious of their father's guilt.

Did he not see her gleaming through the  
glade!

Belike 'twas she, the maiden all forlorn.  
What though she milked no cow with crum-  
pled horn,

Yet, aye she haunts the dale where erst she  
strayed:

And aye, beside her stalks her amorous  
knight!

Still on his thighs their wonted brogues are  
worn,

And through those brogues, still tattered and  
betorn,

His hindward charms gleam an unearthly  
white.

Ah! thus through broken clouds at night's  
high noon

Peeps in fair fragments forth the full-orb'd  
harvest-moon!

The following anecdote will not be wholly  
out of place here, and may perhaps amuse the  
reader. An amateur performer in verse ex-  
pressed to a common friend, a strong desire  
to be introduced to me, but hesitated in ac-  
cepting my friend's immediate offer, on the  
score that "he was, he must acknowledge, the  
author of a confounded severe epigram on my  
Ancient Mariner, which had given me great  
pain." I assured my friend that if the epigram  
was a good one, it would only increase my  
desire to become acquainted with the author,  
and begged to hear it recited: when, to my  
no less surprise than amusement, it proved to  
be one which I had myself some time before  
written and inserted in the *Morning Post*—

To the author of the Ancient Mariner

Your poem must eternal be,

Dear sir! it cannot fail,

For 'tis incomprehensible

And without head or tail.

## CHAPTER II.

Supposed irritability of men of genius—Brought to the test of facts—Causes and occasions of the charge—Its injustice.

I HAVE often thought, that it would be neither uninteresting nor unamusing to analyze, and bring forward into distinct consciousness, that complex feeling, with which readers in general take part against the author, in favour of the critic; and the readiness with which they apply to all poets the old sarcasm of Horace upon the scribblers of his time: "*Genus irritabile vatum.*" A debility and dimness of the imaginative power, and a consequent necessity of reliance on the immediate impressions of the senses, do, we well know, render the mind liable to superstition and fanaticism. Having a deficient portion of internal and proper warmth, minds of this class seek in the crowd *circum fana* for a warmth in common, which they do not possess singly. Cold and phlegmatic in their own nature, like damp hay, they heat and inflame by co-acervation; or like bees they become restless and irritable through the increased temperature of collected multitudes. Hence the German word for fanaticism (such at least was its original import) is derived from the swarming of bees, namely, *schwärmen*, *schwärmerey*. The passion being in an inverse proportion to the insight, that the more vivid, as this the less distinct; anger is the inevitable consequence. The absence of all foundation within their own minds for that which they yet believe both true and indispensable for their safety and happiness, cannot but produce an uneasy state of feeling, an involuntary sense of fear from which nature has no means of rescuing herself but by anger. Experience informs us that the first defence of weak minds is to recriminate.

"There's no philosopher but sees,  
That rage and fear are one disease,  
Though that may burn, and this may freeze.  
They're both alike the ague."

MAD OX.

But where the ideas are vivid, and there exists an endless power of combining and modifying them, the feelings and affections blend more easily and intimately with these ideal creations than with the objects of the senses; the mind is affected by thoughts rather than by things; and only then feels the requisite interest even for the most important events, and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into thoughts. The sanity of the mind is between superstition with fanaticism on the one hand

and enthusiasm with indifference and a diseased slowness to action on the other. For the conceptions of the mind may be so vivid and adequate, as to preclude that impulse to the realizing of them, which is strongest and most restless in those who possess more than mere talent (or the faculty of appropriating and applying the knowledge of others) yet still want something of the creative, and self-sufficing power of absolute genius. For this reason, therefore, they are men of *commanding* genius. While the former rest content between thought and reality, as it were in an *inter-mundium* of which their own living spirit supplies the substance, and their imagination the ever-varying form; the latter must impress their preconceptions on the world without, in order to present them back to their own view with the satisfying degree of clearness, distinctness, and individuality. These in tranquil times are formed to exhibit a perfect poem in palace or temple or landscape-garden; or a tale of romance in canals that join sea with sea, or in walls of rock, which shouldering back the billows, imitate the power, and supply the benevolence of nature to sheltered navies; or in aqueducts that, arching the wide vale from mountain to mountain, give a Palmyra to the desert. But alas! in times of tumult they are the men destined to come forth as the shaping spirit of Ruin, to destroy the wisdom of ages in order to substitute the fancies of a day, and to change kings and kingdoms, as the wind shifts and-shapes the clouds.\* The records of biography seem to confirm this theory. The men of the greatest genius, as far as we can judge from their own works or from the accounts of their contemporaries, appear to have been of calm and tranquil temper, in all that related to themselves. In the inward assurance of permanent fame, they seem to have been either indifferent or resigned, with regard to immediate reputation. Through all the works of Chaucer there reigns a cheerfulness, a manly hilarity, which makes it almost impossible to doubt a correspondent habit of feeling in the author himself. Shakespeare's evenness and sweetness of temper were almost proverbial in his own age. That this did not arise from ignorance of his own comparative greatness, we have abundant proof in his Sonnets, which could scarcely have been known to Pope,† when he

\* "Of old things all are over old,  
Of good things none are good enough :—  
We'll show that we can help to frame  
A world of other stuff.

I too will have my kings, that take  
From me the sign of life and death :  
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,  
Obedient to my breath."

Wordsworth's "Rob Roy."

† Pope was under the common error of his age, an error, far from being sufficiently exploded even at the present day. It consists (as I explained at large, and proved in detail, in my public lectures) in mistaking for the essentials of the Greek stage certain rules, which the wise poets imposed upon themselves, in order to render all the remaining parts of the drama consistent with those that

asserted, that our great bard "grew immortal in his own despite." Speaking of one whom he had celebrated, and contrasting the duration of his works with that of his personal existence, Shakespeare adds:—

"Your name from hence immortal life shall have,  
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die;  
The earth can yield me but a common grave,  
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.  
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,  
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;  
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,  
When all the breathers of this world are dead:  
You still shall live, such virtue hath my pen,  
Where breath most breathes, e'en in the mouths of men."  
SONNET 81st.

I have taken the first that occurred; but Shakespeare's readiness to praise his rivals, *ore pleno*, and the confidence of his own equality with those whom he deemed most worthy of his praise, are alike manifested in the 86th Sonnet.

"Was it the proud full sail of his great verse  
Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,  
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inbearn,  
Making their tomb, the womb wherein they grew?  
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write  
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?  
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night  
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.  
He, nor that affable familiar ghost,  
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,  
As victors of my silence cannot boast;  
I was not sick of any fear from thence!  
But when your countenance filled up his line,  
Then lacked I matter; that enfeebled mine."

In Spenser, indeed, we trace a mind constitutionally tender, delicate, and, in comparison with his three great compeers, I had almost said, effeminate; and this additionally saddened by the unjust persecution of Burleigh, and the severe calamities, which

had been forced upon them by circumstances independent of their will; out of which circumstances the drama itself arose. The circumstances in the time of Shakespeare, which it was equally out of his power to alter, were different, and such as, in my opinion, allowed a far wider sphere, and a deeper and more human interest. Critics are too apt to forget, that rules are but means to an end; consequently where the ends are different, the rules must be likewise so. We must have ascertained what the end is, before we can determine what the rules ought to be. Judging under this impression, I did not hesitate to declare my full conviction, that the consum-

mate judgment of Shakespeare, not only in the general construction, but in all the detail of his dramas, impressed me with greater wonder, than even the might of his genius, or the depth of his philosophy. The substance of these lectures I hope soon to publish; and it is but a debt of justice to myself and my friends to notice, that the first course of lectures, which differed from the following courses only by occasionally varying the illustrations of the same thoughts, was addressed to very numerous, and I need not add, respectable audiences at the Royal Institution. before Mr. Schlegel gave his lectures on the same subjects at Vienna.

overwhelmed his latter days. These causes have diffused over all his compositions "a melancholy grace," and have drawn forth occasional strains, the more pathetic from their gentleness. But no where do we find the least trace of irritability, and still less of quarrelsome or affected contempt of his censurers.

The same calmness, and even greater self-possession, may be affirmed of Milton, as far as his poems and poetic character are concerned. He reserved his anger for the enemies of religion, freedom, and his country. My mind is not capable of forming a more angust conception than arises from the contemplation of this great man in his latter days:—poor, sick, old, blind, slandered, persecuted:

"Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,"

in an age in which he was as little understood by the party for whom, as by that against whom, he had contended, and among men before whom he strode so far as to dwarf himself by the distance; yet still listening to the music of his own thoughts; or, if additionally cheered, yet cheered only by the prophetic faith of two or three solitary individuals, he did nevertheless

"argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bore up and steer'd  
Right onward."

From others only do we derive our knowledge that Milton, in his latter day, had his scorers and detractors; and even in his day of youth and hope, that he had enemies would have been unknown to us, had they not been likewise the enemies of his country.

I am well aware that in advanced stages of literature, when there exist many and excellent models, a high degree of talent, combined with taste and judgment, and employed in works of imagination, will acquire for a man the name of a great genius; though even that *analogon* of genius which, in certain states of society, may even render his writings more popular than the absolute reality could have done, would be sought for in vain in the mind and temper of the author himself. Yet even in instances of this kind, a close examination will often detect that the irritability which has been attributed to the author's genius as its cause, did really originate in an ill conformation of body, obtuse pain, or constitutional defect of pleasurable sensation. What is charged to the author belongs to the man, who would probably have been still more impatient but for the humanizing influences of the very pursuit which yet bears the blame of his irritability.

How then are we to explain the easy credence generally given to

OUT  
OF  
REACH

this charge, if the charge itself be not, as we have endeavoured to show, supported by experience? This seems to me of no very difficult solution. In whatever country literature is widely diffused, there will be many who mistake an intense desire to possess the reputation of poetic genius for the actual powers and original tendencies which constitute it. But men, whose dearest wishes are fixed on objects wholly out of their own power, become in all cases more or less impatient and prone to anger. Besides, though it may be paradoxical to assert, that a man can know one thing and believe the opposite; yet, assuredly, a vain person may have so habitually indulged the wish, and persevered in the attempt to appear what he is not, as to become himself one of his own proselytes. Still, as this counterfeit and artificial persuasion must differ even in the person's own feelings, from a real sense of inward power, what can be more natural than that this difference should betray itself in suspicious and jealous irritability? Even as the flowery sod which covers a hollow may be often detected by its shaking and trembling.

But alas! the multitude of books, and the general diffusion of literature, have produced other and more lamentable effects in the the world of letters, and such as are abundant to explain, though by no means to justify, the contempt with which the best-grounded complaints of injured genius are rejected as frivolous, or entertained as matter of merriment. In the days of Chaucer and Gower, our language might (with due allowance for the imperfections of a simile) be compared to a wilderness of vocal reeds, from which the favourites only of Pan or Apollo could construct even the rude Syrinx; and from this the constructors alone could elicit strains of music. But now, partly by the labours of successive poets, and in part by the more artificial state of society and social intercourse, language, mechanized as it were into a barrel-organ, supplies at once both instrument and tune. Thus, even the deaf may play so as to delight the many. Sometimes (for it is with similes, as it is with jests at a wine-table, one is sure to suggest another) I have attempted to illustrate the present state of our language, in its relation to literature, by a press-room of larger and smaller stereotype pieces, which, in the present Anglo-Gallican fashion of unconnected epigrammatic periods, it requires but an ordinary portion of ingenuity to vary indefinitely, and yet still produce something, which, if *not* sense, will be so like it, as to do as well. Perhaps better; for it spares the reader the trouble of thinking; prevents vacancy, while it indulges indolence; and secures the memory from all danger of an intellectual plethora.

Hence, of all trades, literature at present demands the least talent or information; and, of all modes of literature, the manufacturing of poems. The difference indeed between these and the works of genius is not less than between an egg and an egg-shell; yet, at a distance, they both look alike. Now, it is no less remarkable than true, with how little examination works of polite literature are commonly perused, not only by the mass of readers, but by men of first-rate ability, till some accident or chance\* discussion have roused

\* In the course of my lectures, I had occasion to point out the almost faultless position and choice of words, in Pope's original compositions, particularly in his satires and moral essays, for the purpose of comparing them with his translation of Homer, which, I do not stand alone in regarding as the main source of our pseudo-poetic diction. And this, by-the-by, is an additional confirmation of a remark made, I believe, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that next to the man who formed and elevated the taste of the public, he that corrupted it, is commonly the greatest genius. Among other passages, I analyzed sentence by sentence, and almost word by word, the popular lines,

"As when the moon, resplendent lamp of night," &c.

much in the same way as has been since done, in an excellent article on Chalmers's British Poets in the "Quarterly Review." The impression on the audience in general was sudden and evident; and a number of enlightened and highly educated individuals, who at different times afterwards addressed me on the subject, expressed their wonder that truth so obvious should not have struck them before; but at the same time acknowledged (so much had they been accustomed, in reading poetry, to receive pleasure from the separate images and phrases successively, without asking themselves whether the collective meaning was sense or nonsense) that they might in all probability have read the same passage again twenty times with undiminished admiration, and without once reflecting, that "*ἀστὴρ φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην φαίνεν ἀριστερίαν*" (i.e. the stars around, or near the full moon, shine pre-eminently bright) conveys a just and happy image of a moonlight sky: while it is difficult to determine whether in the lines,

"Around her throne the vivid planets roll,  
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,"

the sense, or the diction, be the more absurd. My answer was; that though I had derived peculiar advantages from my school discipline, and though my general theory of poetry was the same then as now, I had yet experienced the same sensations myself, and felt almost as if I had been newly couched,

when by Mr. Wordsworth's conversation, I had been induced to re-examine with impartial strictness Gray's celebrated Elegy. I had long before detected the defects in the Bard; but the Elegy I had considered as proof against all fair attacks; and to this day I cannot read either without delight and a portion of enthusiasm. At all events, whatever pleasure I may have lost by the clearer perception of the faults in certain passages, has been more than repaid to me, by the additional delight with which I read the remainder.

Another instance occurs to me as I am correcting this sheet, with the Faithful Shepherdess open before me. Mr. Seward first traces Fletcher's lines;

"More foul diseases than e'er yet the hot  
Sun bred thro' his burnings, while the dog  
Pursues the raging lion, throwing the fog  
And deadly vapour from his angry breath,  
Filling the lower world with plague and  
death,"—

to Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar,

"The rampant lion hunts he fast  
With dogs of noisome breath;  
Whose baleful barking brings, in haste,  
Pyne, plagues, and dreary death!"

He then takes occasion to introduce Homer's simile of the sight of Achilles' shield to Priam compared with the Dog-star, literally thus—

"For this indeed is most splendid, but it was made an evil sign, and brings many a consuming disease to wretched mortals." Nothing can be more simple as a description, or more accurate as a simile; which (says Mr. S.) is thus finely translated by Pope:

"Terrific Glory! for his burning breath  
Taints the red air with fevers, plagues,  
and death!"

Now here (not to mention the tremendous bombast) the *Dog Star*, so called, is turned into a *real* dog, a very odd dog, a fire, fever, plague, and death-breathing, red-air-tainting dog; and the whole visual likeness is lost, while the likeness in the effects is rendered absurd by the exaggeration. In Spenser and Fletcher the thought is justifiable; for the images are at least consistent, and it was the intention of the writers to mark the seasons by this allegory of visualized Puns.

their attention, and put them on their guard. And hence individuals below mediocrity, not less in natural power than in acquired knowledge; nay, bunglers that have failed in the lowest mechanical crafts, and whose presumption is in due proportion to their want of sense and sensibility; men who, being first scribblers from idleness and ignorance, next become libellers from envy and malevolence, have been able to drive a successful trade in the employment of the booksellers; nay, have raised themselves into temporary name and reputation with the public at large by that most powerful of all adulation, the appeal to the bad and malignant passions of mankind.\* But as it is the nature of scorn, envy, and all malignant propensities, to require a quick change of objects, such writers are sure, sooner or later, to awake from their dream of vanity to disappointment and neglect with embittered and envenomed feelings. Even during their short-lived success, sensible in spite of themselves on what a shifting foundation it rested, they resent the mere refusal of praise as a robbery, and at the justest censures, kindle at once into violent and undisciplined abuse; till the acute disease, changing into chronical, the more deadly as the less violent, they become the fit instruments of literary detraction and moral slander. They are then no longer to be questioned without exposing the complainant to ridicule; because, forsooth, they are anonymous critics, and authorised as "synodical individuals"† to speak of themselves as *plurali majestatico*! As if literature formed a caste, like that of the *parás* in Hindostan, who, however maltreated, must not dare to deem themselves wronged! As if that which, in all other cases, adds a deeper dye to slander, the circumstance of its being anonymous, here acted only to make

\* Especially "in this age of personality, this age of literary and political gossiping, when the meanest insects are worshipped with a sort of Egyptian superstition, if only the brainless head be atoned for by the sting of personal malignity in the tail! When the most rapid satires have become the objects of a keen public interest, purely from the number of contemporary characters named in the patchwork notes (which possess, however, the comparative merit of being more poetical than the text) and because, to increase the stimulus, the author has sagaciously left his own name for whispers and conjectures! In an age, when even sermons are published with a double appendix stuffed with names—in a generation so transformed from the characteristic reserve of Britons, that from the ephemeral sheet of a London newspaper, to the everlasting Scotch Professorial Quarto, almost every publication exhibits or flatters the epidemic distemper; that

the very "last year's rebuses" in the Ladies Diary, are answered in a serious elegy "on my father's death" with the name and habitat of the elegiac (Edipus subscribed; and "other ingenious solutions were likewise given" to the said rebuses—not as heretofore by Crito, Philander, A. B. Y, &c. but by fifty or sixty plain English surnames at full length with their several places of abode! In an age, when a bashful *Philæthes*, or *Phileutheros* is as rare on the title-pages, and among the signatures of our magazines, as a real name used to be in the days of our shy and notice-shunning grandfathers! When (more exquisite than all) I see an Epic Poem (spirits of Maro and Mæonides make ready to welcome your new compeer!) advertised with the special recommendation, that the said Epic Poem contains more than an hundred names of living persons."

THE FRIEND No. 10, [Oct. 19, 1809.]

† A phrase of Andrew Marvell's.



the slanderer inviolable! Thus, in part, from the accidental tempers of individuals (men of undoubted talent, but not men of genius), tempers rendered yet more irritable by their desire to appear men of genius; but still more effectively by the excesses of the mere counterfeits both of talent and genius; the number, too, being so incomparably greater of those who are thought to be, than those who really are, men of real genius; and in part from the natural, but not therefore the less partial and unjust distinction, made by the public itself between literary and all other property, I believe the prejudice to have arisen, which considers an unusual irascibility concerning the reception of its products as characteristic of genius. It might correct the moral feelings of a numerous class of readers to suppose a review set on foot, the object of which was to criticise all the chief works presented to the public by our ribbon-weavers, calico-printers, cabinet-makers, and china-manufacturers; a review conducted in the same spirit, and which should take the same freedom with personal character, as our literary journals. They would scarcely, I think, deny their belief, not only that the "*genus irritabile*" would be found to include many other species besides that of bards; but that the irritability of trade would soon reduce the resentments of poets into mere shadow-fights in the comparison. Or is wealth the only rational object of human interest? Or, even if this were admitted, has the poet no property in his works? Or is it a rare or culpable case, that he who serves at the altar of the Muses should be compelled to derive his maintenance from the altar, when, too, he has perhaps deliberately abandoned the fairest prospects of rank and opulence in order to devote himself, an entire and undistracted man, to the instruction or refinement of his fellow-citizens? Or, should we pass by all higher objects and motives, all disinterested benevolence, and even that ambition of lasting praise which is at once the crutch and ornament, which at once supports and betrays the infirmity of human virtue; is the character and property of the individual who labours for our intellectual pleasures less entitled to a share of our fellow-feeling than that of the wine-merchant or milliner? Sensibility, indeed, both quick and deep, is not only a characteristic feature, but may be deemed a component part, of genius. But it is no less an essential mark of true genius, that its sensibility is excited by any other cause more powerfully than by its own personal interests; - for this plain reason, that the man of genius lives most in the ideal world, in which the present is still constituted by the future or the past; and because his feelings have been habitually associated with thoughts and images, to the number, clearness, and //

vivacity of which, the sensation of self is always in an inverse proportion. And yet, should he perchance have occasion to repel some false charge, or to rectify some erroneous censure, nothing is more common than for the many to mistake the general liveliness of his manner and language, whatever is the subject, for the effects of peculiar irritation from its accidental relation to himself.\*

For myself, if from my own feelings, or from the less suspicious test of the observations of others, I had been made aware of any literary testiness or jealousy; I trust that I should have been, however, neither silly or arrogant enough to have burthened the imperfection on genius. But an experience (and I should not need documents in abundance to prove my words if I added) a tried experience of twenty years has taught me that the original sin of my character consists in a careless indifference to public opinion, and to the attacks of those who influence it; that praise and admiration have become yearly less and less desirable, except as marks of sympathy; nay, that it is difficult and distressing to me to think with any interest, even about the sale and profit of my works, important, as in my present circumstances, such considerations must needs be. Yet it never occurred to me to believe or fancy, that the *quantum* of intellectual power bestowed on me by nature or education was in any way connected with this habit of my feelings, or that it needed any other parents or fosterers than constitutional indolence, aggravated into languor by ill-health; the accumulating embarrassments of procrastination; the mental cowardice, which is the inseparable companion of procrastination, and which makes us anxious to think and converse on anything rather than on what concerns ourselves: in fine, all those close vexations, whether chargeable on my faults or my fortunes, which leave me but little grief to spare for evils comparatively distant and alien.

Indignation at literary wrongs I leave to men born under happier stars. I cannot afford it. But so far from condemning

\* This is one instance, among many, of deception by the telling the half of a fact, and omitting the other half, when it is from their mutual counteraction and neutralization that the whole truth arises, as a *tertium aliquid* different from either. Thus in Dryden's famous line "Great wit" (which here means genius) "to madness sure is near allied." Now as far as the profound sensibility, which is doubtless one of the components of genius, were alone considered, single and unbalanced, it might be fairly described as exposing the individual to a greater chance of mental de-

range; but then a more than usual rapidity of association, a more than usual power of passing from thought to thought, and image to image, is a component equally essential; and in the due modification of each by the other the genius itself consists; so that it would be just as fair to describe the earth as in imminent danger of exorbitating, or of falling into the sun, according as the asserter of the absurdity confined his attention either to the projectile or to the attractive force exclusively.

Romantic  
and  
Starkness  
writing.

those who can, I deem it a writer's duty, and think it creditable to his heart, to feel and express a resentment proportioned to the grossness of the provocation, and the importance of the object. There is no profession on earth which requires an attention so early, so long, or so unintermitting, as that of poetry; and, indeed, as that of literary composition in general, if it be such as at all satisfies the demands both of taste and of sound logic. How difficult and delicate a task even the mere mechanism of verse is, may be conjectured from the failure of those who have attempted poetry late in life. Where, then, a man has, from his earliest youth, devoted his whole being to an object, which by the admission of all civilized nations, in all ages, is honourable as a pursuit and glorious as an attainment; what of all that relates to himself and his family, if only we except his moral character, can have fairer claims to his protection, or more authorise acts of self-defence, than the elaborate products of his intellect, and intellectual industry? Prudence itself would command us to show, even if defect or diversion of natural sensibility had prevented us from feeling, a due interest and qualified anxiety for the offspring and representatives of our nobler being. I know it, alas! by woeful experience! I have laid too many eggs in the hot sands of this wilderness, the world, with ostrich carelessness and ostrich oblivion. The greater part, indeed, have been trod under foot, and are forgotten; but yet no small number have crept forth into life, some to furnish feathers for the caps of others, and still more to plume the shafts in the quivers of my enemies, of them that unprovoked have lain in wait against my soul.

*"Sic vos, non vobis mellificatis, apes!"*

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### CHAPTER III.

The author's obligations to critics, and the probable occasion—Principles of modern criticism  
—Mr. Southey's works and character.

TO anonymous critics in reviews, magazines, and news-journals of various name and rank, and to satirists with or without a name, in verse or prose, or in verse-text aided by prose-comment, I do seriously believe and profess, that I owe full two-thirds of whatever reputation and publicity I happen to possess. For when the name of an individual has occurred so frequently, in so many works, for so great a length of time, the readers of these works (which with a shelf or two of Beauties, Elegant Extracts, and Anas,

form nine-tenths of the reading of the reading public\*) cannot but be familiar with the name, without distinctly remembering whether it was introduced for eulogy or for censure. And this becomes the more likely, if (as I believe) the habit of perusing periodical works may be properly added to Averroes's† catalogue of Anti-mnemonics, or weakeners of the memory. But where this has not been the case, yet the reader will be apt to suspect that there must be something more than usually strong and extensive in a reputation, that could either require or stand so merciless and long continued a cannonading. Without any feeling of anger therefore (for which, indeed, on my own account, I have no pretext) I may yet be allowed to express some degree of surprise, that after having run the critical gauntlet for a certain class of faults which I had, nothing having come before the judgment-seat in the interim, I should, year after year, quarter after quarter, month after month (not to mention sundry petty periodicals of still quicker revolution, "or weekly or diurnal") have been for at least seventeen years consecutively, dragged forth by them into the foremost ranks of the proscribed, and forced to abide the brunt of abuse, for faults directly opposite, and which I certainly had not. How shall I explain this?

Whatever may have been the case with others, I certainly cannot attribute this persecution to personal dislike, or to envy, or to feelings of vindictive animosity. Not to the former, for, with the exception of a very few who are my intimate friends, and were so

\* For as to the devotees of the circulating libraries, I dare not compliment their pastime, or rather kill-time, with the name of reading. Call it rather a sort of beggarly day-dreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing but laziness and a little mawkish sensibility; while the whole *matériel* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose. We should therefore transfer this species of amusement, (if indeed those can be said to retire *a musis*, who were never in their company, or relaxation be attributable to those, whose bows are never bent) from the genus, reading, to that comprehensive class characterized by the power of reconciling the two contrary yet co-existing propensities of human nature, namely; indulgence of sloth, and hatred of vacancy. In addition to novels and tales of chivalry in prose or rhyme, (by which last I

mean neither rhythm nor metre) this genus comprises as its species, gaming, swinging, or swaying on a chair or gate; spitting over a bridge; smoking; snuff-taking: tête-à-tête quarrels after dinner between husband and wife; conning word by word all the advertisements of the Daily Advertiser in a public house on a rainy day, &c. &c. &c.

† Ex. gr. *Pediculos e capillis excerptos in arenam facere incontusos*; eating of unripe fruit; gazing on the clouds, and (in genere) on moveable things suspended in the air; riding among a multitude of camels; frequent laughter; listening to a series of jests and humorous anecdotes, as when (so to modernize the learned Saracen's meaning) one man's droll story of an Irishman inevitably occasions another's droll story of a Scotchman, which again by the same sort of conjunction disjunctive leads to some *etourderie* of a Welshman, and that again to some sly hit of a Yorkshireman; the habit of read-tomb-stones in church-yards, &c. By-the-by, this catalogue strange as it may appear, is not insusceptible of a sound psychological commentary.

before they were known as authors, I have had little other acquaintance with literary characters, than what may be implied in an accidental introduction, or casual meeting in a mixed company. And, as far as words and looks can be trusted, I must believe that, even in these instances, I had excited no unfriendly disposition.\* Neither by letter, or in conversation, have I ever had dispute or controversy beyond the common social interchange of opinions. Nay, where I had reason to suppose my convictions fundamentally different, it has been my habit, and I may add, the impulse of my nature, to assign the grounds of my belief, rather than the belief itself; and not to express dissent till I could esta-

\* Some years ago, a gentleman, the chief writer and conductor of a celebrated review, distinguished by its hostility to Mr. Southey, spent a day or two at Keswick. That he was, without diminution on this account, treated with every hospitable attention by Mr. Southey and myself, I trust I need not say. But one thing I may venture to notice; that at no period of my life do I remember to have received so many, and such high coloured compliments in so short a space of time. He was likewise circumstantially informed by what series of accidents it had happened, that Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Southey, and I, had become neighbours; and how utterly unfounded was the supposition, that we considered ourselves as belonging to any common school, but that of good sense confirmed by the long-established models of the best times of Greece, Rome, Italy, and England; and still more groundless the notion, that Mr. Southey (for as to myself I have published so little, and that little of so little importance, as to make it almost ludicrous to mention my name at all) could have been concerned in the formation of a poetic sect with Mr. Wordsworth, when so many of his works had been published not only previously to any acquaintance between them; but before Mr. Wordsworth himself had written any thing but in a diction ornate, and uniformly sustained; when too the slightest examination will make it evident, that between those and the after writings of Mr. Southey there exists no other difference than that of a progressive degree of excellence from progressive development of power, and progressive facility from habit and increase of experience. Yet among the first articles which this man wrote after his return from Keswick, we were characterized as "the School of whining and hypochondriacal poets that haunt the Lakes." In reply to a letter from the same gentleman, in which he had asked me, whether I was in earnest in preferring the style of Hooker to that of Dr. Johnson; and Jeremy Taylor to Burke; I stated, somewhat at large, the comparative

excellences and defects which characterized our best prose writers, from the Reformation, to the first half of Charles 2nd: and that of those who had flourished during the present reign and the preceding one. About twelve months afterwards a review appeared on the same subject, in the concluding paragraph of which the reviewer asserts, that his chief motive for entering into the discussion was to separate a rational and qualified admiration of our elder writers, from the indiscriminate enthusiasm of a recent school, who praised what they did not understand, and caricatured what they were unable to imitate. And, that no doubt might be left concerning the persons alluded to, the writer annexes the names of Miss Baillie, Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge. For that which follows, I have only hearsay evidence; but yet such as demands my belief; viz. that on being questioned concerning this apparently wanton attack, more especially with reference to Miss Baillie, the writer had stated as his motives, that this lady when at Edinburgh had declined a proposal of introducing him to her; that Mr. Southey had written against him; and Mr. Wordsworth had talked contemptuously of him; but that as to Coleridge he had noticed him merely because the names of Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge always went together. But if it were worth while to mix together, as ingredients, half the anecdotes which I either myself know to be true, or which I have received from men incapable of intentional falsehood, concerning the characters, qualifications, and motives of our anonymous critics, whose decisions are oracles for our reading public; I might safely borrow the words of the apocryphal Daniel; "*Give me leave, O SOVEREIGN PUBLIC, and I shall slay this dragon without sword or staff.*" For the compound would be as the "*Pitch, and fat, and hair, which Daniel took, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof, and put into the dragon's mouth, and so the dragon burst in sunder: and Daniel said lo: THESE ARE THE GODS YE WORSHIP.*"

blish some points of complete sympathy, some grounds common to both sides, from which to commence its explanation.

Still less can I place these attacks to the charge of envy. The few pages which I have published are of too distant a date, and the extent of their sale a proof too conclusive against their having been popular at any time, to render probable, I had almost said possible, the excitement of envy on their account; and the man who should envy me on any other, verily he must be envy-mad!

Lastly, with as little semblance of reason, could I suspect any animosity towards me from vindictive feelings as the cause. I have before said, that my acquaintance with literary men has been limited and distant, and that I have had neither dispute nor controversy. From my first entrance into life, I have, with few and short intervals, lived either abroad or in retirement. My different essays on subjects of national interest, published at different times, first in the *Morning Post* and then in the *Courier*, with my courses of lectures on the principles of criticism as applied to Shakespeare and Milton, constitute my whole publicity; the only occasions on which I could offend any member of the republic of letters. With one solitary exception, in which my words were first misstated, and then wantonly applied to an individual, I could never learn that I had excited the displeasure of any among my literary contemporaries. Having announced my intention to give a course of lectures on the characteristic merits and defects of English poetry in its different eras; first, from Chaucer to Milton; second, from Dryden inclusive to Thomson; and third, from Cowper to the present day; I changed my plan, and confined my disquisition to the two former eras, that I might furnish no possible pretext for the unthinking to misconstrue, or the malignant to misapply my words, and having stamped their own meaning on them, to pass them as current coin in the marts of garrulity or detraction.

Praises of the unworthy are felt by ardent minds as robberies of the deserving; and it is too true, and too frequent, that Bacon, Harrington, Machiavel, and Spinoza are not read, because Hume, Condillac, and Voltaire are. But in promiscuous company no prudent man will oppugn the merits of a contemporary in his own supposed department; contenting himself with praising in his turn those whom he deem excellent. If I should ever deem it my duty at all to oppose the pretensions of individuals, I would oppose them in books which could be weighed and answered, in which I could evolve the whole of my reasons and feelings, with their requisite limits and modifications; not in irrecoverable con-

versation, where, however strong the reasons might be, the feelings that prompted them would assuredly be attributed by some one or other to envy and discontent. Besides, I well know, and I trust have acted on that knowledge, that it must be the ignorant and injudicious who extol the unworthy; and the eulogies of critics without taste or judgment are the natural reward of authors without feeling or genius. *Sint unicuique sua præmia.*

How then, dismissing, as I do, these three causes, am I to account for attacks, the long continuance and inveteracy of which it would require all three to explain. The solution may seem to have been given, or at least suggested, in a note to a preceding page. *I was in habits of intimacy with Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Southey!* This, however, transfers rather than removes the difficulty. Be it, that by an unconscionable extension of the old adage, *noscitur a socio*, my literary friends are never under the water-fall of criticism, but I must be wet through with the spray; yet how came the torrent to descend upon *them*?

First, then, with regard to Mr. Southey. I well remember the general reception of his earlier publications: viz., the poems published with Mr. Lovell under the names of Moschus and Bion (1795), the two volumes of poems under his own name (1797), and the Joan of Arc (1796). The censures of the critics by profession are extant, and may be easily referred to:—careless lines, inequality in the merit of the different poems, and (in the lighter works) a predilection for the strange and whimsical; in short, such faults as might have been anticipated in a young and rapid writer, were indeed sufficiently enforced. Nor was there at that time wanting a party spirit to aggravate the defects of a poet, who, with all the courage of uncorrupted youth, had avowed his zeal for a cause which he deemed that of liberty, and his abhorrence of oppression by whatever name consecrated. But it was as little objected by others, as dreamt of by the poet himself, that he preferred careless and prosaic lines on rule and of forethought, or indeed that he pretended to any other art or theory of poetic diction, besides that which we may all learn from Horace, Quintilian, the admirable dialogue *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*, or Strada's Prolusions; if indeed natural good sense and the early study of the best models in his own language had not infused the same maxims more securely, and, if I may venture the expression, more vitally. All that could have been fairly deduced was, that in his taste and estimation of writers Mr. Southey agreed far more with Warton than with Johnson. Nor do I mean to deny, that at all times Mr. Southey was of the same mind with Sir

Philip Sidney in preferring an excellent ballad in the humblest style of poetry to twenty indifferent poems that strutted in the highest. And by what have his works, published since then, been characterized, each more strikingly than the preceding, but by greater splendour, a deeper pathos, profounder reflections, and a more sustained dignity of language and of metre? Distant may the period be, but whenever the time shall come, when all his works shall be collected by some editor worthy to be his biographer, I trust that an *excerpta* of all the passages in which his writings, name, and character have been attacked, from the pamphlets and periodical works of the last twenty years, may be an accompaniment. Yet that it would prove medicinal in after times I dare not hope; for as long as there are readers to be delighted with calumny, there will be found reviewers to calumniate. And such readers will become in all probability more numerous, in proportion as a still greater diffusion of literature shall produce an increase of sciolists; and sciolism bring with it petulance and presumption. In times of old, books were as religious oracles; as literature advanced, they next became venerable preceptors; they then descended to the rank of instructive friends; and as their numbers increased, they sank still lower to that of entertaining companions; and at present they seem degraded into culprits to hold up their hands at the bar of every self-elected, yet not the less peremptory, judge, who chooses to write from humour or interest, from enmity or arrogance, and to abide the decision (in the words of Jeremy Taylor) "of him that reads in malice, or him that reads after dinner."

The same gradual retrograde movement may be traced in the relation which the authors themselves have assumed towards their readers. From the lofty address of Bacon: "These are the meditations of Francis of Verulam, which, that posterity should be possessed of, he deemed *their* interest;" or from dedication to Monarch or Pontiff, in which the honour given was asserted in equipoise to the patronage acknowledged from Pindar's

———— ἐπ' ἄλλοι-  
 -σι δ' ἄλλοι μεγάλοι: τὸ δ' ἔσχατον κορυ-  
 -φοῦται βασιλεῦσι Μηκέτι  
 πάπταινε πόρσιον.  
 εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον  
 ὑψοῦ χρόνον πατεῖν, ἐμέ  
 τε τοσσάδε νικαρόροις  
 ὁμιλεῖν, πρόφαντον σορίαν καθ' Ἑλ-  
 -λανας ἔοντα παντᾶ.

OLYPM. OD. 1.



Poets and Philosophers, rendered diffident by their very number, addressed themselves to "*learned readers*;" then, aimed to conciliate the graces of "*the candid reader*;" till, the critic still rising as the author sank, the amateurs of literature collectively were erected into a municipality of judges, and addressed as the Town! And now finally, all men being supposed able to read, and all readers able to judge, ~~the multitudinous public, shaped into personal unity by the magic of abstraction, sits nominal despot on the throne of criticism.~~ But, alas! as in other despotisms, it but echoes the decisions of its invisible ministers, whose intellectual claims to the guardianship of the Muses seem, for the greater part, analogous to the physical qualifications which adapt their oriental brethren for the superintendence of the Harem. Thus it is said that St. Nepomuc was installed the guardian of bridges, because he had fallen over one, and sunk out of sight. Thus, too, St. Cecilia is said to have been first propitiated by musicians, because, having failed in her own attempts, she had taken a dislike to the art and all its successful professors. But I shall probably have occasion hereafter to deliver my convictions more at large concerning this state of things, and its influences on taste, genius, and morality.

In the Thalaba, the Madoc, and still more evidently, in the unique\* Cid, the Kehama, and as last, so best, the Don Roderick, Southey has given abundant proof: "*Se cogitâsse quid sit magnum dare aliquid in manus hominum: nec persuadere sibi posse, non sœpe tractandum quod placere et semper et omnibus cupiat.*"—Plin. Ep. Lib. 7, Ep. 17. But, on the other hand, I guess that Mr. Southey was quite unable to comprehend wherein could consist the crime or mischief of printing half a dozen or more playful poems; or, to speak more generally, compositions which would be enjoyed or passed over, according as the taste and humour of the reader might chance to be, provided they contained nothing immoral. In the present age "*peritura parcere chartæ*" is emphatically an unreasonable demand. The merest trifle he ever sent abroad had tenfold better claims to its ink and paper, than all the silly criticisms which prove no more than that the critic was not one of those for whom the trifle was written, and than all the grave exhortations to a greater reverence for the public. As if the passive page of a book, by having an epigram or doggerel tale impressed

\* I have ventured to call it "unique;" not only because I know no work of the kind in our language (if we except a few chapters of the old translation of Froissart) none, which uniting the charms of romance and history, keeps the imagination so constantly on the wing, and yet leaves so much for after reflection;

but likewise, and chiefly, because it is a compilation, which in the various excellencies of translation, selection, and arrangement, required and proves greater genius in the compiler, as living in the present state of society, than in the original composers.

on it, instantly assumed at once locomotive power and a sort of ubiquity, so as to flutter and buz in the ear of the public, to the sore annoyance of the said mysterious personage. But what gives an additional and more ludicrous absurdity to these lamentations is the curious fact, that if, in a volume of poetry, the critic should find poem or passage which he deems more especially worthless, he is sure to select and reprint it in the review; by which, on his own grounds, he wastes as much more paper than the author, as the copies of a fashionable review are more numerous than those of the original book; in some, and those the most prominent instances, as ten thousand to five hundred. I know nothing that surpasses the vileness of deciding on the merits of a poet or painter—not by characteristic defects, for where there is genius, these always point to his characteristic beauties—but by accidental failures or faulty passages; except the imprudence of defending it, as the proper duty and most instructive part of criticism. Omit, or pass slightly over, the expression, grace, and grouping of Raffael's figures; but ridicule in detail the knitting-needles and broom-twigs that are to represent trees in his back grounds, and never let him hear the last of his gallipots! Admit that the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton are not without merit; but repay yourself for this concession by reprinting at length the two poems on the University Carrier! As a fair specimen of his Sonnets, quote:

"A Book was writ of late called Tetrachordon;"

and as characteristic of his rhythm and metre, cite his literal translation of the first and second Psalm! In order to justify yourself, you need only assert that, had you dwelt chiefly on the beauties and excellencies of the poet, the admiration of these might seduce the attention of future writers from the objects of their love and wonder, to an imitation of the few poems and passages in which the poet was most unlike himself.

But till reviews are conducted on far other principles, and with far other motives; till in the place of arbitrary dictation and petulant sneers, the reviewers support their decisions by reference to fixed canons of criticism, previously established and deduced from the nature of man; reflecting minds will pronounce it arrogance in them thus to announce themselves to men of letters as the guides of their taste and judgment. To the purchaser and mere reader it is, at all events, an injustice. He who tells me that there are defects in a new work, tells me nothing which I should not have taken for granted without his information. But he who points out and elucidates the beauties of an original work, does indeed give me interesting information, such as experience would

not have authorized me in anticipating. And as to compositions which the authors themselves announce with "*Hæc ipsi novimus esse nihil*," why should we judge by a different rule two printed works, only because the one author is alive and the other in his grave? What literary man has not regretted the prudery of Spratt in refusing to let his friend Cowley appear in his slippers and dressing-gown? I am not perhaps the only one who has derived an innocent amusement from the riddles, conundrums, trisyllable lines, &c., &c., of Swift and his correspondents, in hours of languor, when to have read his more finished works would have been useless to myself, and, in some sort, an act of injustice to the author. But I am at a loss to conceive by what perversity of judgment these relaxations of his genius could be employed to diminish his fame as the writer of *Gulliver's Travels* and the *Tale of a Tub*. Had Mr. Southey written twice as many poems of inferior merit or partial interest as have enlivened the journals of the day, they would have added to his honour with good and wise men, not merely or principally as proving the versatility of his talents, but as evidences of the purity of that mind, which even in its levities never wrote a line which it need regret on any moral account.

I have in imagination transferred to the future biographer the duty of contrasting Southey's fixed and well-earned fame, with the abuse and indefatigable hostility of his anonymous critics from his early youth to his ripest manhood. But I cannot think so ill of human nature as not to believe, that these critics have already taken shame to themselves, whether they consider the object of their abuse in his moral or his literary character. For reflect but on the variety and extent of his acquirements! He stands second to no man, either as an historian or as a bibliographer; and when I regard him as a popular essayist, (for the articles of his compositions in the reviews are for the greater part essays on subjects of deep or curious interest rather than criticisms on particular works\*)—I look in vain for any writer, who has conveyed so much information, from so many and such recondite sources, with so many just and original reflections, in a style so lively and poignant, yet so uniformly classical and perspicuous; no one in short who has combined so much wisdom with so much wit; so much truth and knowledge with so much life and fancy. His prose is always intelligible and always entertaining. In poetry he has attempted almost every species of

\* See the articles on Methodism, in the "*Quarterly Review*"; the small volume on the *New System of Education*, &c.

composition known before, and he has added new ones; and if we except the highest lyric, (in which how few, how very few even of the greatest minds have been fortunate) he has attempted every species successfully: from the political song of the day, thrown off in the playful overflow of honest joy and patriotic exultation, to the wild ballad;\* from epistolary ease and graceful narrative, to the austere and impetuous moral declamation; from the pastoral claims and wild streaming lights of the *Thalaba*, in which sentiment and imagery have given permanence even to the excitement of curiosity; and from the full blaze of the *Kehama* (a gallery of finished pictures in one splendid fancy piece, in which, notwithstanding, the moral grandeur rises gradually above the brilliance of the colouring and the boldness and novelty of the machinery) to the more sober beauties of the *Madoc*; and lastly, from the *Madoc* to his *Roderick*, in which, retaining all his former excellencies of a poet eminently inventive and picturesque, he has surpassed himself in language and metre, in the construction of the whole, and in the splendour of particular passages.

Here then shall I conclude? No! The characters of the deceased, like the *encomia* on tombstones, as they are described with religious tenderness, so are they read, with allowing sympathy indeed, but yet with rational deduction. There are men who deserve a higher record; men with whose characters it is the interest of their contemporaries, no less than that of posterity, to be made acquainted; while it is yet possible for impartial censure, and even for quick-sighted envy, to cross-examine the tale without offence to the courtesies of humanity; and while the eulogist detected in exaggeration or falsehood must pay the full penalty of his baseness in the contempt which brands the convicted flatterer. Publicly has Mr. Southey been reviled by men, who (I would fain hope for the honour of human nature) hurled fire-brands against a figure of their own imagination, publicly have his talents been depreciated, his principles denounced; as publicly do I therefore, who have known him intimately, deem it my duty to leave recorded, that it is Southey's almost unexampled felicity to possess the best gifts of talent and genius free from all their characteristic defects. To those who remember the state of our public schools and universities some twenty years past, it will appear no ordinary praise in any man to have passed from innocence into virtue, not only free from all vicious habit, but unstained by one act of intemperance, or the degradations akin to intemperance. That scheme of head, heart, and habitual demeanour, which in his early man-

\* See the incomparable *Return to Moscow*, and the *Old Woman of Berkeley*.

hood, and first controversial writings, Milton, claiming the privilege of self-defence, asserts of himself, and challenges his calumniators to disprove; this will his school-mates, his fellow-collegians, and his maturer friends, with a confidence proportioned to the intimacy of their knowledge, bear witness to, as again realized in the life of Robert Southey. But still more striking to those, who by biography or by their own experience are familiar with the general habits of genius, will appear the poet's matchless industry and perseverance in his pursuits; the worthiness and dignity of those pursuits; his generous submission to tasks of transitory interest, or such as *his* genius alone could make otherwise; and that having thus more than satisfied the claims of affection or prudence, he should yet have made for himself time and power, to achieve more, and in more various departments, than almost any other writer has done, though employed wholly on subjects of his own choice and ambition. But as Southey possesses, and is not possessed by, his genius, even so is he the master even of his virtues. The regular and methodical tenor of his daily labours, which would be deemed rare in the most mechanical pursuits, and might be envied by the mere man of business, loses all semblance of formality in the dignified simplicity of his manners, in the spring and healthful cheerfulness of his spirits. Always employed, his friends find him always at leisure. No less punctual in trifles, than stedfast in the performance of highest duties, he inflicts none of those small pains and discomforts which irregular men scatter about them, and which in the aggregate so often become formidable obstacles both to happiness and utility; while on the contrary he bestows all the pleasures, and inspires all that ease of mind on those around him or connected with him, which perfect consistency, and (if such a word might be framed) absolute reliability, equally in small as in great concerns, cannot but inspire and bestow: when this too is softened without being weakened by kindness and gentleness. I know few men who so well deserve the character which an ancient attributes to Marcus Cato, namely, that he was likest virtue, inasmuch as he seemed to act aright, not in obedience to any law or outward motive, but by the necessity of a happy nature which could not act otherwise. As son, brother, husband, father, master, friend, he moves with firm yet light steps, alike unostentatious, and alike exemplary. As a writer, he has uniformly made his talents subservient to the best interests of humanity, of public virtue, and domestic piety; his cause has ever been the cause of pure religion and of liberty, of national independence and of national

illumination. When future critics shall weigh out his guerdon of praise and censure, it will be Southey the poet only, that will supply them with the scanty materials for the latter. They will likewise not fail to record, that as no man was ever a more constant friend, never had poet more friends and honourers among the good of all parties; and that quacks in education, quacks in politics, and quacks in criticism were his only enemies.\*

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## CHAPTER IV.

The Lyrical Ballads with the preface—Mr. Wordsworth's earlier poems—On fancy and imagination—The investigation of the distinction important to the fine arts.

I HAVE wandered far from the object in view, but as I fancied to myself readers who would respect the feelings that had tempted me from the main road; so I dare calculate on not a few, who will warmly sympathize with them. At present it will be sufficient for my purpose, if I have proved that Mr. Southey's writings no more than my own, furnished the original occasion to this fiction of a new school of poetry, and of clamours against its supposed founders and proselytes.

As little do I believe that Mr. Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads

\* It is not easy to estimate the effects which the example of a young man as highly distinguished for strict purity of disposition and conduct, as for intellectual power and literary acquirements, may produce on those of the same age with himself, especially on those of similar pursuits and congenial minds. For many years my opportunities of intercourse with Mr. Southey have been rare, and at long intervals; but I dwell with unabated pleasure on the strong and sudden, yet I trust not fleeting influence, which my moral being underwent on my acquaintance with him at Oxford, whither I had gone at the commencement of our Cambridge vacation, on a visit to an old school-fellow. Not indeed on my moral or religious principles, for they had never been contaminated; but in awakening the sense of the duty and dignity of making my actions accord with those principles, both in word and deed. The irregularities only not universal among the young men of my standing, which I always knew to be wrong, I then learnt to feel as degrading; learnt to know that an opposite conduct, which was at that time considered by us as the easy virtue of cold and selfish prudence, might originate in the noblest emotions, in views the most disinterested and imaginative. It is not however from grateful recollections only, that I have been impelled thus to leave these, my

deliberate sentiments on record; but in some sense as a debt of justice to the man whose name has been so often connected with mine, for evil to which he is a stranger. As a specimen I subjoin part of a note from "The Beauties of the Anti-Jacobin," in which having previously informed the public that I had been dishonoured at Cambridge for preaching Deism, at a time when for my youthful ardour in defence of Christianity, I was derided as a bigot by the proselytes of French Phi- (or to speak more truly, Psi-) losophy, the writer concludes with these words: "since this time he has left his native country, commenced citizen of the world, *left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute. Ex his discipulis, his friends LAMB and SOUTHEY.*" With severest truth it may be asserted, that it would not be easy to select two men more exemplary in their domestic affections than those whose names were thus printed at full length as in the same rank of morals with a denounced infidel and fugitive, who had left his children *fatherless and his wife destitute*: Is it surprising that many good men remained longer than perhaps they otherwise would have done, adverse to a party, which encouraged and openly rewarded the authors of such atrocious calumnies? *Qualis es, nescio: sed per quales agis, scio et doleo.*

were in themselves the cause. I speak exclusively of the two volumes so entitled. A careful and repeated examination of these confirms me in the belief, that the omission of less than a hundred lines would have precluded nine-tenths of the criticism on this work. I hazard this declaration, however, on the supposition, that the reader had taken it up, as he would have done any other collection of poems purporting to derive their subjects or interests from the incidents of domestic or ordinary life, intermingled with higher strains of meditation which the poet utters in his own person and character; with the proviso, that they were perused without knowledge of, or reference to, the author's peculiar opinions, and that the reader had not had his attention previously directed to those peculiarities. In these, as was actually the case with Mr. Southey's earlier works, the lines and passages which might have offended the general taste, would have been considered as mere inequalities, and attributed to inattention, not to perversity of judgment. The men of business who had passed their lives chiefly in cities, and who might therefore be expected to derive the highest pleasure from acute notices of men and manners conveyed in easy, yet correct and pointed language; and all those who, reading but little poetry, are most stimulated with that species of it which seems most distant from prose, would probably have passed by the volumes altogether. Others more catholic in their taste, and yet habituated to be most pleased when most excited, would have contented themselves with deciding, that the author had been successful in proportion to the elevation of his style and subject. Not a few, perhaps, might by their admiration of the Lines written near Tintern Abbey, those Left upon a Seat under a Yew-tree, the Old Cumberland Beggar, and Ruth, have been gradually led to peruse with kindred feeling, The Brothers, the Hart-leap Well, and whatever other poems in that collection may be described as holding a middle place between those written in the highest and those in the humblest style; as for instance between the Tintern Abbey and The Thorn, or the Simon Lee. Should their taste submit to no further change, and still remain unreconciled to the colloquial phrases, or the imitations of them, that are, more or less, scattered through the class last mentioned; yet even from the small number of the latter, they would have deemed them but an inconsiderable subtraction from the merit of the whole work; or, what is sometimes not displeasing in the publication of a new writer, as serving to ascertain the natural tendency, and consequently the proper direction of the author's genius.

In the critical remarks, therefore, prefixed and annexed to the Lyrical Ballads, I believe, that we may safely rest, as the true origin of the unexampled opposition which Mr. Wordsworth's writings have been since doomed to encounter. The humbler passages in the poems themselves were dwelt on and cited to justify the rejection of the theory. What in and for themselves would have been either forgotten or forgiven as imperfections, or at least comparative failures, provoked direct hostility when announced as intentional, as the result of choice after full deliberation. Thus the poems, admitted by all as excellent, joined with those which had pleased the far greater number, though they formed two-thirds of the whole work, instead of being deemed (as in all right they should have been, even if we take for granted that the reader judged aright) an atonement for the few exceptions, gave wind and fuel to the animosity against both the poems and the poet. In all perplexity there is a portion of fear, which predisposes the mind to anger. Not able to deny that the author possessed both genius and a powerful intellect, they felt very positive, but were not quite certain, that he might not be in the right, and they themselves in the wrong; an unquiet state of mind, which seeks alleviation by quarrelling with the occasion of it, and by wondering at the perverseness of the man, who had written a long and argumentative essay to persuade them that—

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair;"

in other words, that they had been all their lives admiring without judgment, and were now about to censure without reason.\*

\* In opinions of long continuance, and in which we had never before been molested by a single doubt, to be suddenly convinced of an error, is almost like being convicted of a fault. There is a state of mind which is the direct antithesis of that, which takes place when we make a bull. The bull namely consists in the bringing together two incompatible thoughts, with the sensation, but without the sense, of their connection. The psychological condition, or that which constitutes the possibility of this state, being such disproportionate vividness of two distant thoughts, as extinguishes or obscures the consciousness of the intermediate images or conceptions, or wholly abstracts the attention from them. Thus in the well-known bull, "*I was a fine child, but they changed me;*" the first conception expressed in the word "*I,*" is that of personal identity—*Ego contemplan*: the second expressed in the word "*me,*" is the visual image or object by which the mind represents to itself its past condition, or rather, its personal identity under the form in which it imagined itself previously to have existed,—

*Ego contemplatus.* Now the change of one visual image for another involves in itself no absurdity, and becomes absurd only by its immediate juxta-position with the first thought, which is rendered possible by the whole attention being successively absorbed in each singly, so as not to notice the interjacent notion, "*changed,*" which by its incongruity with the first thought, "*I,*" constitutes the bull. Add only, that this process is facilitated by the circumstance of the words "*I*" and "*me,*" being sometimes equivalent, and sometimes having a distinct meaning; sometimes, namely, signifying the act of self-consciousness, sometimes the external image in and by which the mind represents that act to itself, the result and symbol of its individuality. Now suppose the direct contrary state, and you will have a distinct sense of the connection between two conceptions, without that sensation of such connection which is supplied by habit. The man feels as if he were standing on his head, though he cannot but see that he is truly standing on his feet. This, as a painful sensation, will of course have a



That this conjecture is not wide from the mark, I am induced to believe from the noticeable fact, which I can state on my own knowledge, that the same general censure should have been grounded almost by each different person on some different poem. Among those whose candour and judgment I estimate highly, I distinctly remember six who expressed their objections to the Lyrical Ballads almost in the same words, and altogether to the same purport, at the same time admitting that several of the poems had given them great pleasure; and, strange as it might seem, the composition which one had cited as execrable, another had quoted as his favourite. I am indeed convinced in my own mind, that could the same experiment have been tried with these volumes, as was made in the well-known story of the picture, the result would have been the same; the parts which had been covered by the number of the black spots on the one day, would be found equally *albo lapida notatæ* on the succeeding.

However this may be, it is assuredly hard and unjust to fix the attention on a few separate and insulated poems with as much aversion as if they had been so many plague-spots on the whole work, instead of passing them over in silence, as so much blank paper, or leaves of a bookseller's catalogue; especially, as no one pretends to have found immorality or indelicacy; and the poems, therefore, at the worst, could only be regarded as so many light or inferior coins in a rouleau of gold, not as so much alloy in a weight of bullion. A friend whose talents I hold in the highest respect, but whose judgment and strong sound sense I have had almost continued occasion to revere, making the usual complaints to me concerning both the style and subjects of Mr. Wordsworth's minor poems; I admitted that there were some few of the tales and incidents, in which I could not myself find a sufficient cause for their having been recorded in metre. I mentioned the Alice Fell as an instance. "Nay," replied my friend, with more than usual quickness of manner, "I cannot agree with you there! that I own does seem to me a remarkably pleasing poem." In the Lyrical Ballads (for my experience does not enable me to extend the remark equally unqualified to the two subsequent volumes) I have heard at different times, and from different individuals, every single poem extolled and reprobated, with the exception of those of loftier kind, which as was before observed,

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tendency to associate itself with the person who occasions it; even as persons, who have been by painful means restored from derange-

ment, are known to feel an involuntary dislike towards their physician.

seem to have won universal praise. This fact of itself would have made me diffident in my censures, had not a still stronger ground been furnished by the strange contrast of the heat and long continuance of the opposition, with the nature of the faults stated as justifying it. The seductive faults, the *dulcia vitia* of Cowley, Marini, or Darwin, might reasonably be thought capable of corrupting the public judgment for half a century, and require a twenty years' war, campaign after campaign, in order to dethrone the usurper and re-establish the legitimate taste. But that a downright simpleness, under the affectation of simplicity, prosaic words in feeble metre, silly thoughts in childish phrases, and a preference of mean, degrading, or at best trivial associations and characters, should succeed in forming a school of imitators, a company of almost religious admirers, and this too among young men of ardent minds, liberal education, and not

"with academic laurels unbestowed ;"

and that this bare and bald counterfeit of poetry, which is characterised as below criticism, should for nearly twenty years have well-nigh engrossed criticism, as the main, if not the only butt of review, magazine, pamphlet, poem, and paragraph ; this is indeed matter of wonder ! Of yet greater is it, that the contest should still continue as undecided\* as that between Bacchus and the frogs in Aristophanes, when the former descended to the realms of the departed to bring back the spirit of old and genuine poesy :

X. βρεκεκεκέξ, κοᾶξ, κοᾶξ !

Δ. ἀλλ' ἐξόλοισθ' ἀντῷ κοᾶξ.  
οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔστ' ἀλλ' ἡ κοᾶξ.  
οἰμώζετ' : οὐ γὰρ μοι μέλει.

\* Without however the apprehensions attributed to the Pagan reformer of the poetic republic. If we may judge from the preface to the recent collection of his poems, Mr. W. would have answered with Xanthias—

Σὺ δ' οὐκ εἰσεῖσας τὸν φόβον τῶν ῥημάτων,  
καὶ τὰς ἀπειλὰς ; ΞΑΝ. οὐ μὰ Δι', οὐδ' ἐφρόν-  
τισα.

And here let me dare hint to the authors of the numerous parodies, and pretended imitations of Mr. Wordsworth's style, that at once to conceal and convey wit and wisdom in the semblance of folly and dullness, as is done in the clowns and fools, nay even in the Dogberry, of our Shakespeare, is doubtless a proof of genius, or at all events, of satiric talent; but that the attempt to ridicule a silly and

childish poem, by writing another still sillier and still more childish, can only prove (if it prove any thing at all) that the parodist is a still greater blockhead than the original writer, and what is far worse, a malignant coxcomb to boot. The talent for mimicry seems strongest where the human race are most degraded. The poor, naked, half human savages of New Holland were found excellent mimics : and in civilized society, minds of the very lowest stamp alone satirize by copying. At least the difference, which must blend with and balance the likeness, in order to constitute a just imitation, existing here merely in caricature, detracts from the libeller's heart, without adding an iota to the credit of his understanding.

- X. ἀλλὰ μὴν κεκραξόμεσθ' ἂν ἡμῶν  
 γ' ὅπόσον ἢ φάρυγξ ἂν ἡμῶν  
 χανδάνη δι' ἡμέρας,  
 βρεκεκεκέξ, κοᾶξ, κοᾶξ!
- Δ. τούτῳ γὰρ οὐ νικήσετε.
- X. οὐδὲ μὲν ἡμᾶς σὺ πάντως.
- Δ. οὐδὲ μὴν ὑμεῖς γε δὴ μ'  
 οὐδέποτε κεκραξομαι γὰρ  
 κἂν με δέῃ δι' ἡμέρας,  
 ἕως ἂν ὑμῶν ἐπικρατήσω τοῦ κοᾶξ!
- X. βρεκεκεκέξ, ΚΟᾶΞ, ΚΟᾶΞ!

During the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication, entitled, Descriptive Sketches; and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is a harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating. The language was not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted, as by its own impatient strength; while the novelty and struggling crowd of images acting in conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demanded always a greater closeness of attention than poetry (at all events than descriptive poetry) has a right to claim. It not seldom, therefore, justified the complaint of obscurity. In the following extract I have sometimes fancied that I saw an emblem of the poem itself and of the author's genius as it was then displayed:

"'Tis storm; and hid in mist from hour to hour,  
 All day the floods a deepening murmur pour;  
 The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight:  
 Dark is the region as with coming night;  
 And yet what frequent bursts of overpowering light!  
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
 Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form;  
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine  
 The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;  
 Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,  
 At once to pillars turn'd that flame with gold;  
 Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun  
 The West, that burns like one dilated sun,  
 Where in a mighty crucible expire  
 The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire."

The poetic Psyche, in its process to full development, undergoes

as many changes as its Greek namesake, the Butterfly.\* And it is remarkable how soon genius clears and purifies itself from the faults and errors of its earliest products; faults which, in its earliest compositions, are the more obtrusive and confluent, because, as heterogeneous elements which had only a temporary use, they constitute the very ferment by which themselves are carried off. Or we may compare them to some diseases, which must work on the humours, and be thrown out on the surface, in order to secure the patient from their future recurrence. I was in my twenty-fourth year when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally; and, while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind by his recitation of a manuscript poem which still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza and tone of style were the same as those of *The Female Vagrant*, as originally printed in the first volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. There was here no mark of strained thought or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery; and, as the poet hath himself well described in his *Lines on re-visiting the Wye*, manly reflection and human associations had given both variety and an additional interest to natural objects, which in the passion and appetite of the first love they had seemed to him neither to need or permit. The occasional obscurities which had risen from an imperfect control over the resources of his native language had almost wholly disappeared, together with that worse defect of arbitrary and illogical phrases, at once hackneyed and fantastic, which hold so distinguished a place in the *technique* of ordinary poetry, and will, more or less, alloy the earlier poems of the truest genius, unless the attention has been specifically directed to their worthlessness and incongruity.† I did not perceive anything par-

\* The fact, that in Greek *Psyche* is the common name for the soul and the butterfly, is thus alluded to in the following stanza from an unpublished poem of the author:—

"The butterfly the ancient Grecians made  
The soul's fair emblem, and its only  
name—  
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade  
Of mortal life! For in this earthly frame  
Our's is the reptile's lot, much toil, much  
blame,  
Manifold motions making little speed,  
And to deform and kill the things whereon  
we feed."

S. T. C.

† "Mr. Wordsworth, even in his two earliest, *The Evening Walk* and the *Descriptive Sketches*, is more free from this latter defect than most of the young poets, his contem-

poraries. It may however be exemplified, together with the harsh and obscure construction, in which he more often offended, in the following lines:—

"Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,  
Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry;  
Where hardly given the hopeless waste to  
cheer,  
Denied the bread of life the foodful ear,  
Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,  
And apple sickens pale in summer's ray;  
Ev'n here content has fix'd her smiling  
reign  
With independence, child of high disdain."

I hope, I need not say, that I have quoted these lines for no other purpose than to make my meaning fully understood. It is to be regretted that Mr. Wordsworth has not republished these two poems entire.

ticular in the mere style of the poem alluded to during its recitation, except indeed such difference as was not separable from the thought and manner; and the Spenserian stanza, which always, more or less, recalls to the reader's mind Spenser's own style, would doubtless have authorized, in my then opinion, a more frequent descent to the phrases of ordinary life, than could, without an ill effect, have been hazarded in the heroic couplet. It was not, however, the freedom from false taste, whether as to common defects or to those more properly his own, which made so unusual an impression on my feelings immediately, and subsequently on my judgment. It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the objects observed; and, above all, the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere, and with it the depth and height of the ideal world, around forms, incidents, and situations of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew-drops. "To find no contradiction in the union of old and new; to contemplate the Ancient of Days and all His works with feelings as fresh as if all had then sprang forth at the first creative fiat; characterizes the mind that feels the riddle of the world, and may help to unravel it. To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar:

"With sun and moon and stars throughout the year,  
And man and woman;"

this is the character and privilege of genius, and one of the marks which distinguish genius from talents. And, therefore, it is the prime merit of genius, and its most unequivocal mode of manifestation, so to represent familiar objects, as to awaken in the minds of others a kindred feeling concerning them, and that freshness of sensation which is the constant accompaniment of mental, no less than of bodily, convalescence. Who has not a thousand times seen snow fall on water? Who has not watched it with a new feeling from the time that he has read Burns' comparison of sensual pleasure:

"To snow that falls upon a river  
A moment white—then gone for ever!"

In poems, equally as in philosophic disquisitions, genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty, whilst it rescues the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Truths of all others the

most awful and mysterious, yet being at the same time of universal interest, are too often considered as so true, that they lose all the life and efficiency of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul side by side with the most despised and exploded errors."\*

This excellence, which in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings is more or less predominant, and which constitutes the character of his mind, I no sooner felt, than I sought to understand. Repeated meditations led me first to suspect (and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions, and effects, matured my conjecture into full conviction), that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties; instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power. It is not, I own, easy to conceive a more opposite translation of the Greek *phantasia* than the Latin *imaginatio*; but it is equally true that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective unconscious good sense, working progressively to desynonymize those words originally of the same meaning, which the conflux of dialects had supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German, and which the same cause, joined with accidents of translation from original works of different countries, occasion in mixed languages like our own. The first and most important point to be proved is, that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word, and (this done) to appropriate that word exclusively to one meaning, and the synonyme, should there be one, to the other. But if (as will be often the case in the arts and sciences)

\* *The Friend*, page 76, No. 5. As *The Friend* was printed on stamped sheets, and sent only by the post to a very limited number of subscribers, the author has felt less objection to quote from it, though a work of his own. To the public at large indeed it is the same as a volume in manuscript.

† This is effected either by giving to the one word a general, and to the other an exclusive use; as, "to put on the back" and "to indorse;" or by an actual distinction of meanings as "naturalist," and "physician;" or by difference of relation as "I," and "Me;" (each of which the rustics of our different provinces still use in all the cases singular of the first personal pronoun). Even the mere difference, or corruption, in the pronunciation of the same word, if it have become general, will produce a new word with a distinct signification; thus "property" and "propriety," the latter of which, even to the time of Charles II. was the written word for all the senses of both. Thus too "mister" and

"master" both hasty pronunciations of the same word "magister," "mistress," and "miss," "if" and "give," &c. &c. There is a sort of minim immortal among the *animalcula infusoria* which has not naturally either birth, or death, absolute beginning, or absolute end: for at a certain period a small point appears on its back, which deepens and lengthens till the creature divides in two, and the same process recommences in each of the halves now become integral. This may be a fanciful, but it is by no means a bad emblem of the formation of words, and may facilitate the conception, how immense a nomenclature may be organized from a few simple sounds by rational beings in a social state. For each new application, or excitement of the same sound, will call forth a different sensation, which cannot but affect the pronunciation. The after recollection of the sound, without the same vivid sensation will modify it still further; till at length all trace of the original likeness is worn away.

no synonyme exists, we must either invent or borrow a word. In the present instance the appropriation had already begun, and been legitimated in the derivative adjective: Milton had a highly imaginative, Cowley a very fanciful, mind. If, therefore, I should succeed in establishing the actual existences of two faculties generally different, the nomenclature would be at once determined. To the faculty by which I had characterized Milton, we should confine the term *imagination*; while the other would be contra-distinguished as *fancy*. Now were it once fully ascertained, that this division is no less grounded in nature than that of delirium from mania, or Otway's:

"Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber,"

from Shakespeare's:

"What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?"

or from the preceding apostrophe to the elements, the theory of the fine arts, and of poetry in particular, could not, I thought, but derive some additional and important light. It would, in its immediate effects, furnish a torch of guidance to the philosophical critic, and ultimately to the poet himself. In energetic minds truth soon changes by domestication into power; and, from directing in the discrimination and appraisal of the product, becomes influencive in the production. To admire on principle is the only way to imitate without loss of originality.)

It has been already hinted that metaphysics and psychology have long been my hobby-horse. But to have a hobby-horse, and to be vain of it, are so commonly found together, that they pass almost for the same. I trust, therefore, that there will be more good humour than contempt in the smile with which the reader chastises my self-complacency, if I confess myself uncertain whether the satisfaction for the perception of a truth new to myself may not have been rendered more poignant by the conceit that it would be equally so to the public. There was a time, certainly, in which I took some little credit to myself in the belief that I had been the first of my countrymen who had pointed out the diverse meaning of which the two terms were capable, and analyzed the faculties to which they should be appropriated. Mr. W. Taylor's recent volume of synonymes I have not yet seen;\* but his speci-

\* I ought to have added, with the exception of a single sheet which I accidentally met with at the printer's. Even with this scanty specimen, I found it impossible to doubt the talent, or not to admire the ingenuity of the author. That his distinctions were for the greater part unsatisfactory to

my mind, proves nothing against their accuracy; but it may possibly be serviceable to him in case of a second edition, if I take this opportunity of suggesting the query; whether he may not have been occasionally misled, by having assumed, as to me he appeared to have done, the non-existence of any absolute

fication of the terms in question has been clearly shown to be both insufficient and erroneous by Mr. Wordsworth, in the preface added to the late collection of his Lyrical Ballads, and other poems. The explanation which Mr. Wordsworth has himself given will be found to differ from mine chiefly, perhaps, as our objects are different. It could scarcely indeed happen otherwise, from the advantage I have enjoyed of frequent conversation with him, on a subject to which a poem of his own first directed my attention, and my conclusions concerning which he had made more lucid to myself by many happy instances drawn from the operation of natural objects on the mind. But it was Mr. Wordsworth's purpose to consider the influences of fancy and imagination as they are manifested in poetry, and from the different effects to conclude their diversity in kind; while it is my object to investigate the seminal principle, and then from the kind to deduce the degree. My friend has drawn a masterly sketch of the branches, with their *poetic* fruitage. I wish to add the trunk, and even the roots, as far as they lift themselves above ground, and are visible to the naked eye of our common consciousness.

Yet even in this attempt I am aware that I shall be obliged to draw more largely on the reader's attention than so immethodical a miscellany can authorize, when in such a work (*the Ecclesiastical Polity*) of such a mind as Hooker's the judicious author, though no less admirable for the perspicuity than for the port and dignity of his language; and though he wrote for men of learning in a learned age; saw nevertheless occasion to anticipate and guard against "complaints of obscurity," as often as he was to trace his

synonymes in our language? Now I cannot but think, that there are many which remain for our posterity to distinguish and appropriate, and which I regard as so much reverential wealth in our mother-tongue. When two distinct meanings are confounded under one or more words, (and such must be the case, as sure as our knowledge is progressive and of course imperfect) erroneous consequences will be drawn, and what is true in one sense of the word, will be affirmed as true *in toto*. Men of research, startled by the consequences, seek in the things themselves (whether in or out of the mind) for a knowledge of the fact, and having discovered the difference, remove the equivocation either by the substitution of a new word, or by the appropriation of one of the two or more words that had before been used promiscuously. When this distinction has been so naturalized and of such general currency, that the language itself does as it were *think* for us (like the sliding rule which is the mechanic's safe

substitute for arithmetical knowledge) we then say, that it is evident to *common sense*. Common sense, therefore, differs in different ages. What was born and christened in the schools passes by degrees into the world at large, and becomes the property of the market and the tea-table. At least I can discover no other meaning of the term, *common sense*, if it is to convey any specific difference from sense and judgment *in genere*, and where it is not used scholastically for the *universal reason*. Thus in the reign of Charles II. the philosophic world was called to arms by the moral sophisms of Hobbes, and the ablest writers exerted themselves in the detection of an error, which a school-boy would now be able to confute by the mere recollection, that *compulsion* and *obligation* conveyed two ideas perfectly disparate, and that what appertained to the one, had been falsely transferred to the other by a mere confusion of terms.



subject "to the highest well-spring and fountain." Which (continues he), "because men are not accustomed to, the pains we take are more needful a great deal than acceptable; and the matters we handle seem by reason of newness (till the mind grow better acquainted with them) dark and intricate." I would gladly therefore spare both myself and others this labour, if I knew how without it to present an intelligible statement of my poetic creed; not as my opinions, which weigh for nothing, but as deductions from established premises conveyed in such a form, as is calculated either to effect a fundamental conviction, or to receive a fundamental confutation. If I may dare once more adopt the words of Hooker, "they, unto whom we shall seem tedious, are in no wise injured by us, because it is in their own hands to spare that labour, which they are not willing to endure." Those at least, let me be permitted to add, who have taken so much pains to render me ridiculous for a perversion of taste, and have supported the charge by attributing strange notions to me on no other authority than their own conjectures, owe it to themselves as well as to me not to refuse their attention to my own statement of the theory, which I do acknowledge; or shrink from the trouble of examining the grounds on which I rest it, or the arguments which I offer in its justification.

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## CHAPTER V.

On the law of association—Its history traced from Aristotle to Hartley.

**T**HERE have been men in all ages who have been impelled, as by an instinct, to propose their own nature as a problem, and who devote their attempts to its solution. The first step was to construct a table of distinctions, which they seem to have formed on the principle of the absence or presence of the Will. Our various sensations, perceptions, and movements were classed as active or passive, or as *media* partaking of both. A still finer distinction was soon established between the voluntary and the spontaneous. In our perceptions we seem to ourselves merely passive to an external power, whether as a mirror reflecting the landscape, or as a blank canvas on which some unknown hand paints it. For it is worthy of notice, that the latter, or the system of idealism may be traced to sources equally remote with the former, or materialism; and Berkeley can boast an ancestry at least as venerable as Gassendi or Hobbes. These conjectures,

however, concerning the mode in which our perceptions originated, could not alter the natural difference of things and thoughts. In the former, the cause appeared wholly external, while in the latter, sometimes our will interfered as the producing or determining cause, and sometimes our nature seemed to act by a mechanism of its own, without any conscious effort of the will, or even against it. Our inward experiences were thus arranged in three separate classes, the passive sense, or what the school-men call the merely receptive quality of the mind; the voluntary, and the spontaneous, which holds the middle place between both. But it is not in human nature to meditate on any mode of action without inquiring after the law that governs it; and in the explanation of the spontaneous movements of our being, the metaphysician took the lead of the anatomist and natural philosopher. In Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and India the analysis of the mind had reached its noon and manhood, while experimental research was still in its dawn and infancy. For many, very many centuries, it has been difficult to advance a new truth, or even a new error, in the philosophy of the intellect or morals. With regard, however, to the laws that direct the spontaneous movements of thought and the principle of their intellectual mechanism there exists, it has been asserted, an important exception most honourable to the moderns, and in the merit of which our own country claims the largest share. Sir James Mackintosh (who amid the variety of his talents and attainments is not of less repute for the depth and accuracy of his philosophical inquiries, than for the eloquence with which he is said to render their most difficult results perspicuous, and the driest attractive), affirmed in the lectures, delivered by him at Lincoln's Inn Hall, that the law of association as established in the contemporaneity of the original impressions, formed the basis of all true psychology; and any ontological or metaphysical science not contained in such (i. e. empirical) psychology was but a web of abstractions and generalizations. Of this prolific truth, of this great fundamental law, he declared Hobbes to have been the original discoverer, while its full application to the whole intellectual system we owe to David Hartley; who stood in the same relation to Hobbes as Newton to Kepler; the law of association being that to the mind, which gravitation is to matter.

Of the former clause in this assertion, as it respects the comparative merits of the ancient metaphysicians, including their commentators, the school-men, and of the modern French and British philosophers from Hobbes to Hume, Hartley and Condil-

lac, this is not the place to speak. So wide indeed is the chasm between this gentleman's philosophical creed and mine, that so far from being able to join hands, we could scarce make our voices intelligible to each other: and to bridge it over would require more time, skill and power than I believe myself to possess. But the latter clause involves for the greater part a mere question of fact and history, and the accuracy of the statement is to be tried by documents rather than reasoning.

First, then, I deny Hobbes's claim in toto: for he had been anticipated by Des Cartes, whose work *De Methodo* preceded Hobbes's *De Natura Humana* by more than a year. But what is of much more importance, Hobbes builds nothing on the principle which he had announced. He does not even announce it, as differing in any respect from the general laws of material motion and impact: nor was it, indeed, possible for him so to do, compatibly with his system, which was exclusively material and mechanical. Far otherwise is it with Des Cartes; greatly as he too in his after writings (and still more egregiously his followers, De la Forge, and others) obscured the truth by their attempts to explain it on the theory of nervous fluids, and material configurations. But in his interesting work *De Methodo*, Des Cartes relates the circumstance which first led him to meditate on this subject, and which since then has been often noticed and employed as an instance and illustration of the law. A child who with its eyes bandaged had lost several of his fingers by amputation, continued to complain for many days successively of pains, now in this joint and now in that of the very fingers which had been cut off. Des Cartes was led by this incident to reflect on the uncertainty with which we attribute any particular place to any inward pain or uneasiness, and proceeded after long consideration to establish it as a general law, that contemporaneous impressions, whether images or sensations, recall each other mechanically. On this principle, as a ground work, he built up the whole system of human language, as one continued process of association. He showed, in what sense not only general terms, but generic images (under the name of abstract ideas) actually existed, and in what consists their nature and power. As one word may become the general exponent of many, so by association a simple image may represent a whole class. But in truth Hobbes himself makes no claims to any discovery, and introduces this law of association, or (in his own language) *discursus mentalis*, as an admitted fact, in the solution alone of which, this by causes purely physiological, he arrogates any originality. His system is briefly this; when-

ever the senses are impinged on by external objects, whether by the rays of light reflected from them, or by effluxes of their finer particles, there results a correspondent motion of the innermost and subtlest organs. This motion constitutes a representation, and there remains an impression of the same, or a certain disposition to repeat the same motion. Whenever we feel several objects at the same time, the impressions that are left (or in the language of Mr. Hume, the ideas) are linked together. Whenever therefore any one of the movements, which constitute a complex impression, is renewed through the senses, the others succeed mechanically. It follows of necessity therefore that Hobbes, as well as Hartley and all others who derive association from the connection and interdependence of the supposed matter, the movements of which constitute our thoughts, *must* have reduced all its forms to the one law of time. But even the merit of announcing this law with philosophic precision cannot be fairly conceded to him. For the objects of any two ideas\* need not have co-existed in the same sensation in order to become mutually associable. The same result will follow when one only of the two ideas has been represented by the senses, and the other by the memory.

Long however before either Hobbes or Des Cartes the law of association had been defined, and its important functions set forth

\* I here use the word "idea" in Mr. Hume's sense on account of its general currency among the English metaphysicians; though against my own judgment, for I believe that the vague use of this word has been the cause of much error and much confusion. The word, *idéa*, in its original sense as used by Pindar, Aristophanes, and in the Gospel of Matthew, represented the visual abstraction of a distant object, when we see the whole without distinguishing its parts. Plato adopted it as a technical term, and as the antithesis to *εἰδωλον*, or sensuous images; the transient and perishable emblems, or mental words of ideas. The ideas themselves he considered as mysterious powers, living, seminal, formative, and exempt from time. In this sense the word became the property of the Platonic school; and it seldom occurs in Aristotle, without some such phrase annexed to it, as according to Plato, or as Plato says. Our English writers to the end of Charles II's reign, or somewhat later, employed it either in the original sense, or platonically, or in a sense nearly correspondent to our present use of the substantive, *Ideal*, always however opposing it, more or less, to image, whether of present or absent objects. The reader will not be displeased with the following interesting exemplification from Bishop

Jeremy Taylor. "St. Lewis the King sent Ivo Bishop of Chartres on an embassy, and he told, that he met a grave and stately matron on the way with a censer of fire in one hand, and a vessel of water in the other; and observing her to have a melancholy, religious, and phantastic deportment and look, he asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water; she answered, my purpose is with the fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God purely for the love of God. But we rarely meet with such spirits which love virtue so metaphysically as to abstract her from all sensible compositions, and love the purity of the idea." Des Cartes having introduced into his philosophy the fanciful hypothesis of *material idea*, or certain configurations of the brain, which were as so many moulds to the influxes of the external world; Mr. Locke adopted the term, but extended its signification to whatever is the immediate object of the mind's attention or consciousness. Mr. Hume distinguishing those representations which are accompanied with a sense of a present object, from those reproduced by the mind itself, designated the former by *impressions*, and confined the word *idea* to the latter.

by Melancthon, Ammerbach, and Ludovicus Vives; more especially by the last. *Phantasia*, it is to be noticed, is employed by Vives to express the mental power of comprehension, or the *active* function of the mind; and *imaginatio* for the receptivity (*vis receptiva*) of impressions, or for the *passive* perception. The power of combination he appropriates to the former: "*quæ singula et simpliciter acceperat imaginatio, ex conjungit et disjungit phantasia.*" And the law by which the thoughts are spontaneously presented follows thus; "*quæ simul sunt a phantasia comprehensa si alterutrum occurrat, solet secum alterum representare.*" To time therefore he subordinates all the other exciting causes of association. The soul proceeds "*a causa ad effectum, ab hoc ad instrumentum, a parte ad totum;*" thence to the place, from place to person, and from this to whatever preceded or followed, all as being parts of a total impression, each of which may recall the other. The apparent springs "*saltus vel transitus etiam longissimos,*" he explains by the same thought having been a component part of two or more total impressions. Thus "*ex Scipione venio in cogitationem potentie Turcicæ, proper victorias ejus in eâ parte Asiæ, in qua regnabat Antiochus.*"

But from Vives I pass at once to the source of his doctrines, and (as far as we can judge from the remains yet extant of Greek philosophy) as to the first, so to the fullest and most perfect enunciation of the associative principle, viz. to the writings of Aristotle; and of these principally to the books *De Anima*, *De Memoria*, and that which is entitled in the old translations *Parva Naturalia*. Inasmuch as later writers have either deviated from, or added to his doctrines, they appear to me to have introduced either error or groundless supposition.

In the first place it is to be observed, that Aristotle's positions on this subject are unmixed with fiction. The wise Stagyræte speaks of no successive particles propagating motion like billiard balls (as Hobbes); nor of nervous or animal spirits, where inanimate and irrational solids are thawed down, and distilled, or filtrated by ascension, into living and intelligent fluids, that etch and re-etch engravings on the brain (as the followers of Des Cartes, and the humoral pathologists in general); nor of an oscillating ether which was to effect the same service for the nerves of the brain considered as solid fibres, as the animal spirits perform for them under the notion of hollow tubes (as Hartley teaches)—nor finally, (with yet more recent dreamers) of chemical compositions by elective affinity, or of an electric light at once the immediate object and the ultimate organ of inward vision, which

risers to the brain like an Aurora Borealis, and there disporting in various shapes (as the balance of plus and minus, or negative and positive, is destroyed or re-established) images out both past and present. Aristotle delivers a just theory without pretending to an hypothesis; or in other words a comprehensive survey of the different facts, and of their relations to each other without supposition, i. e. a fact *placed under* a number of facts, as their common support and explanation; though in the majority of instances these hypotheses or suppositions better deserve the name of *ὑποποιήσεις*, or *suffictions*. He uses indeed the word *κινήσεις*, to express what we call representations or ideas, but he carefully distinguishes them from material motion, designating the latter always by annexing the words *ἐν τόπῳ*, or *κατὰ τόπον*. On the contrary in his treatise *De Anima*, he excludes place and motion from all the operations of thought, whether representations or volitions, as attributes utterly and absurdly heterogeneous.

The general law of association, or more accurately, the common condition under which all exciting causes act, and in which they may be generalized, according to Aristotle is this. Ideas by having been together acquire a power of recalling each other; or every partial representation awakes the total representation of which it had been a part. In the practical determination of this common principle to particular recollections, he admits five agents or occasioning causes: 1st, connection in time, whether simultaneous, preceding or successive; 2nd, vicinity or connection in space; 3rd, interdependence or necessary connection, as cause and effect; 4th, likeness; and 5th, contrast. As an additional solution of the occasional seeming chasms in the continuity of reproduction he proves, that movements or ideas possessing one or the other of these five characters had passed through the mind as intermediate links, sufficiently clear to recall other parts of the same total impressions with which they had co-existed, though not vivid enough to excite that degree of attention which is requisite for distinct recollection, or as we may aptly express it, after-consciousness. In association then consists the whole mechanism of the reproduction of impressions, in the Aristotelian Psychology. It is the universal law of the passive fancy and mechanical memory; that which supplies to all other faculties their objects, to all thought the elements of its materials.

In consulting the excellent commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas on the *Parva Naturalia* of Aristotle, I was struck at once with its close resemblance to Hume's Essay on Association. The main thoughts were the same in both, the order of the thoughts was

the same, and even the illustrations differed only by Hume's occasional substitution of more modern examples. I mentioned the circumstance to several of my literary acquaintances, who admitted the closeness of the resemblance, and that it seemed too great to be explained by mere coincidence; but they thought it improbable that Hume should have held the pages of the Angelic Doctor worth turning over. But some time after Mr. Payne, of the King's mews, showed Sir James Mackintosh some odd volumes of St. Thomas Aquinas, partly perhaps from having heard that Sir James (then Mr.) Mackintosh had in his lectures passed a high encomium on this canonized philosopher, but chiefly from the fact that the volumes had belonged to Mr. Hume, and had here and there marginal marks and notes of reference in his own handwriting. Among these volumes was that which contains the *Parva Naturalia*, in the old Latin version, swathed and swaddled in the commentary afore mentioned!

It remains then for me, first to state wherein Hartley differs from Aristotle; then, to exhibit the grounds of my conviction, that he differed only to err; and next, as the result, to show by what influences of the choice and judgment the associative power becomes either memory or fancy; and, in conclusion, to appropriate the remaining offices of the mind to the reason, and the imagination. With my best efforts to be as perspicuous as the nature of language will permit on such a subject, I earnestly solicit the good wishes and friendly patience of my readers, while I thus go "sounding on my dim and perilous way."

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## CHAPTER VI.

That Hartley's system, as far as it differs from that of Aristotle, is neither tenable in theory, nor founded in facts.

OF Hartley's hypothetical vibrations in his hypothetical oscillating ether of the nerves, which is the first and most obvious distinction between his system and that of Aristotle, I shall say little. This, with all other similar attempts to render that an object of the sight which has no relation to sight, has been already sufficiently exposed by the younger Reimar, Maasz, &c. as outraging the very axioms of mechanics in a scheme, the merit of which consists in its being mechanical. Whether any other philosophy be possible, but the mechanical; and again, whether the mechanical system can have any claim to be called philosophy;

are questions for another place. It is, however, certain, that as long as we deny the former, and affirm the latter, we must bewilder ourselves, whenever we would pierce into the *adyta* of causation; and all that laborious conjecture can do, is to fill up the gaps of fancy. Under that despotism of the eye (the emancipation from which Pythagoras by his numeral, and Plato by his musical, symbols, and both by geometric discipline, aimed at, as the first *προπαιδευτικόν* of the mind)—under this strong sensuous influence, we are restless because invisible things are not the objects of vision; and metaphysical systems, for the most part, become popular, not for their truth, but in proportion as they attribute to causes a susceptibility of being *seen*, if only our visual organs were sufficiently powerful.

From a hundred possible confutations let one suffice. According to this system the idea or vibration *a* from the external object A becomes associable with the idea or vibration *m* from the external object M, because the oscillation *a* propagated itself so as to reproduce the oscillation *m*.—But the original impression from M was essentially different from the impression A: unless therefore different causes may produce the same effect, the vibration *a* could never produce the vibration *m*: and this therefore could never be the means by which *a* and *m* are associated. To understand this, the attentive reader need only be reminded, that the ideas are themselves, in Hartley's system, nothing more than their appropriate configurative vibrations. It is a mere delusion of the fancy to conceive the pre-existence of the ideas, in any chain of association, as so many differently coloured billiard-balls in contact, so that when an object, the billiard-stick, strikes the first or white ball, the same motion propagates itself through the red, green, blue, black, &c., and sets the whole in motion. No! we must suppose the very same force, which *constitutes* the white ball, to *constitute* the red or black: or the idea of a circle to *constitute* the idea of a triangle; which is impossible.

But it may be said, that, by the sensations from the objects A and M, the nerves have acquired a disposition to the vibrations *a* and *m*, and therefore *a* need only be repeated in order to reproduce *m*. Now we will grant, for a moment, the possibility of such a disposition in a material nerve, which yet seems scarcely less absurd than to say, that a weather-cock has acquired a habit of turning to the east, from the wind having been so long in that quarter: for if it be replied, that we must take in the circumstance of life, what then becomes of the mechanical philosophy? And what is the nerve, but the flint which the wag placed in the pot as



the first ingredient of his stone-broth, requiring only salt, turnips, and mutton, for the remainder! But if we waive this, and pre-suppose the actual existence of such a disposition, two cases are possible. Either, every idea has its own nerve and correspondent oscillation, or this is not the case. If the latter be the truth, we should gain nothing by these dispositions; for then, every nerve having several dispositions, when the motion of any other nerve is propagated into it, there will be no ground or cause present why exactly the oscillation *m* should arise, rather than any other to which it was equally pre-disposed. But if we take the former, and let every idea have a nerve of its own, then every nerve must be capable of propagating its motion into many other nerves; and again, there is no reason assignable why the vibration *m* should arise, rather than any other *ad libitum*.

It is fashionable to smile at Hartley's vibrations and vibraticuncles; and his work has been re-edited by Priestley, with the omission of the material hypothesis. But Hartley was too great a man, too coherent a thinker, for this to have been done either consistently or to any wise purpose. For all other parts of his system, as far as they are peculiar to that system, once removed from their mechanical basis, not only lose their main support, but the very motive which led to their adoption. Thus the principle of contemporaneity, which Aristotle had made the common condition of all the laws of association, Hartley was constrained to represent as being itself the sole law. For to what law can the action of material atoms be subject, but that of proximity in place? And to what law can their motions be subjected, but that of time? Again, from this results inevitably, that the will, the reason, the judgment, and the understanding, instead of being the determining causes of association, must needs be represented as its creatures, and among its mechanical effects. Conceive, for instance, a broad stream, winding through a mountainous country with an indefinite number of currents, varying and running into each other according as the gusts chance to blow from the opening of the mountains. The temporary union of several currents in one, so as to form the main current of the moment, would present an accurate image of Hartley's theory of the will.

Had this been really the case, the consequence would have been, that our whole life would be divided between the despotism of outward impressions, and that of senseless and passive memory. Take his law in its highest abstraction and most philosophical form, viz. that every partial representation recalls the total repre-

sensation of which it was a part; and the law becomes nugatory, were it only from its universality. In practice it would indeed be mere lawlessness. Consider, how immense must be the sphere of a total impression from the top of St. Paul's church; and how rapid and continuous the series of such total impressions. If therefore we suppose the absence of all interference of the will, reason, and judgment, one or other of two consequences must result. Either the ideas (or reliques of such impression) will exactly imitate the order of the impression itself, which would be absolute delirium: or any one part of that impression might recall any other part, and (as from the law of continuity, there must exist in every total impression some one or more parts which are components of some other following total impression, and so on *ad infinitum*) any part of any impression might recall any part of any other, without a cause present to determine what it should be. For to bring in the will, or reason, as causes of their own cause, that is, as at once causes and effects, can satisfy those only who in their pretended evidences of a God having first demanded organization, as the sole cause and ground of intellect, will then coolly demand the pre-existence of intellect, as the cause and ground-work of organization. There is in truth but one state to which this theory applies at all, namely, that of complete light-headedness; and even to this it applies but partially, because the will and reason are perhaps never wholly suspended.

A case of this kind occurred in a Catholic town in Germany, a year or two before my arrival at Göttingen, and had not then ceased to be a frequent subject of conversation. A young woman of four or five and twenty, who could neither read nor write, was seized with a nervous fever; during which, according to the asseverations of all the priests and monks of the neighbourhood, she became possessed, and, as it appeared, by a very learned devil. She continued incessantly talking Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in very pompous tones and with most distinct enunciation. This possession was rendered more probable by the known fact, that she was or had been a heretic. Voltaire humorously advises the devil to decline all acquaintance with medical men; and it would have been more to his reputation, if he had taken this advice in the present instance. The case had attracted the particular attention of a young physician, and by his statement many eminent physiologists and psychologists visited the town, and cross-examined the case on the spot. Sheets full of her ravings were taken down from her own mouth, and were found to consist of sentences, coherent and intelligible each for itself, but with

little or no connection with each other. Of the Hebrew, a small portion only could be traced to the Bible; the remainder seemed to be in the Rabbinical dialect. All trick or conspiracy was out of the question. Not only had the young woman ever been a harmless, simple creature; but she was evidently labouring under a nervous fever. In the town, in which she had been resident for many years as a servant in different families, no solution presented itself. The young physician, however, determined to trace her past life step by step; for the patient herself was incapable of returning a rational answer. He at length succeeded in discovering the place where her parents had lived: travelled thither, found them dead, but an uncle surviving; and from him learnt that the patient had been charitably taken by an old protestant pastor at nine years old, and had remained with him some years, even till the old man's death. Of this pastor the uncle knew nothing, but that he was a very good man. With great difficulty, and after much search, our young medical philosopher discovered a niece of the pastor's, who had lived with him as his housekeeper, and had inherited his effects. She remembered the girl; related that her venerable uncle had been too indulgent, and could not bear to hear the girl scolded; that she was willing to have kept her, but that after her patron's death, the girl herself refused to stay. Anxious inquiries were then, of course, made concerning the pastor's habits; and the solution of the phenomenon was soon obtained. For it appeared that it had been the old man's custom, for years, to walk up and down a passage of his house into which the kitchen door opened, and to read to himself with a loud voice, out of his favourite books. A considerable number of these were still in the niece's possession. She added, that he was a very learned man and a great Hebraist. Among the books were found a collection of Rabbinical writings, together with several of the Greek and Latin Fathers; and the physician succeeded in identifying so many passages with those taken down at the young woman's bedside, that no doubt could remain in any rational mind concerning the true origin of the impressions made on her nervous system.

This authenticated case furnishes both proof and instance, that reliques of sensation may exist for an indefinite time in a latent state, in the very same order in which they were originally impressed; and as we cannot rationally suppose the feverish state of the brain to act in any other way than as a stimulus, this fact (and it would not be difficult to adduce several of the same kind) contributes to make it even probable, that all thoughts are in

themselves imperishable; and, that if the intelligent faculty should be rendered more comprehensive, it would require only a different and apportioned organization, *the body celestial* instead of *the body terrestrial*, to bring before every human soul the collective experience of its whole past existence. And this, this, perchance, is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious hieroglyphics every idle word is recorded! Yea, in the very nature of a living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened or lost from that living chain of causes, to all whose links, conscious or unconscious, the free-will, our only absolute Self, is co-extensive and co-present. But not now dare I longer discourse of this, waiting for a loftier mood, and a nobler subject, warned from within and from without, that it is a profanation to speak of these mysteries τοῖς μηδὲ φαντασθεῖσιν, ὡς καλὸν τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης πρόσωπον, καὶ ὡς οὔτε ἔσπερος οὔτε ἔωος οὕτω καλὰ. Τὸ γὰρ ὁρῶν πρὸς τὸ ὁρώμενον συγγενὲς καὶ ὁμοῖον ποιησάμενον δεῖ ἐπιβάλλειν τῇ θεᾷ· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πώποτε εἶδεν ὀφθαλμὸς ἥλιον ἡλιοείδης μὴ γεγενημένος, οὐδὲ τὸ Καλὸν ἂν ἴδῃ ψυχὴ μὴ καλὴ γενομένη.—PLOTINUS.\*

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## CHAPTER VII.

Of the necessary consequences of the Hartleian theory—Of the original mistake or equivocation which procured admission for the theory—*Memoria Technica*.

WE will pass by the utter incompatibility of such a law (if law it may be called, which would itself be the slave of chances) with even that appearance of rationality forced upon us by the outward phenomena of human conduct, abstracted from our own consciousness. We will agree to forget this for the moment, in order to fix our attention on that subordination of final to efficient causes in the human being, which flows of necessity from the assumption, that the will, and with the will all acts of thought and attention, are parts and products of this blind mechanism, instead of being distinct powers, whose function it is to control, determine, and modify the phantasmal chaos of association. The soul becomes a

\* "To those to whose imagination it has never been presented, how beautiful is the countenance of justice and wisdom; and that neither the morning nor the evening star are so fair. For in order to direct the view aright, it behoves that the beholder should have made himself congenerous and similar

to the object beheld. Never could the eye have beheld the sun, had not its own essence been soliform," (i. e. pre-configured to light by a similarity of essence with that of light) "neither can a soul not beautiful attain to an intuition of beauty."

mere *ens logicum*; for as a real separable being, it would be more worthless and ludicrous, than the grimalkins in the cat-harpsichord, described in the *Spectator*. For these did form a part of the process; but in Hartley's scheme the soul is present only to be pinched or stroked, while the very squeals or purring are produced by an agency wholly independent and alien. It involves all the difficulties, all the incomprehensibility (if it be not indeed, *ὡς ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ*, the absurdity) of intercommunion between substances that have no one property in common, without any of the convenient consequences that bribed the judgment to the admission of the *dualistic* hypothesis. Accordingly, this *caput mortuum* of the Hartleian process has been rejected by his followers, and the consciousness considered as a *result*, as a *tune*, the common product of the breeze and the harp: though this again is the mere remotion of one absurdity to make way for another equally preposterous. For what is harmony but a mode of relation, the very esse of which is percipi? An *ens rationale*, which pre-supposes the power, that by perceiving creates it? The razor's edge becomes a saw to the armed vision; and the delicious melodies of Purcell or Cimarosa might be disjointed stammerings to a hearer whose partition of time should be a thousand times subtler than ours. But this obstacle too let us imagine ourselves to have surmounted, and "at one bound high overleap all bound!" Yet according to this hypothesis the disquisition, to which I am at present soliciting the reader's attention, may be as truly said to be written by Saint Paul's church, as by me: for it is the mere motion of my muscles and nerves; and these again are set in motion from external causes equally passive, which external causes stand themselves in interdependent connection with everything that exists or has existed. Thus the whole universe co-operates to produce the minutest stroke of every letter, save only that I myself, and I alone, have nothing to do with it, but merely the causeless and effectless beholding of it when it is done. Yet scarcely can it be called a beholding; for it is neither an act nor an effect; but an impossible creation of a *something-nothing* out of its very contrary! It is the mere quicksilver plating behind a looking-glass; and in this alone consists the poor worthless I! The sum total of my moral and intellectual intercourse dissolved into its elements is reduced to extension, motion, degrees of velocity, and those diminished copies of configurative motion, which form what we call notions, and notions of notions. Of such philosophy well might Butler say:

\* The metaphysics but a puppet motion  
That goes with screws, the notion of a notion:

The copy of a copy and lame draught  
 Unnaturally taken from a thought :  
 That counterfeits all pantomimic tricks,  
 And turns the eyes, like an old crucifix ;  
 That counterchanges whatsoe'er it calls  
 B' another name, and makes it true or false ;  
 Turns truth to falsehood, falsehood into truth,  
 By virtue of the Babylonian's tooth."

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.

The inventor of the watch did not in reality invent it ; he only looked on, while the blind causes, the only true artists, were unfolding themselves. So must it have been too with my friend Allston, when he sketched his picture of the dead man revived by the bones of the prophet Elijah. So must it have been with Mr. Southey and Lord Byron, when the one fancied himself composing his Roderick, and the other his Childe Harold. The same must hold good of all systems of philosophy ; of all arts, governments, wars by sea and by land ; in short, of all things that ever have been or that ever will be produced. For according to this system it is not the affections and passions that are at work, in as far as they are sensations or thoughts. We only fancy that we act from rational resolves, or prudent motives, or from impulses of anger, love, or generosity. In all these cases the real agent is a *something-nothing-everything*, which does all of which we know, and knows nothing of all that itself does.

The existence of an infinite spirit, of an intelligent and holy will, must on this system be mere articulated motions of the air. For as the function of the human understanding is no other than merely (to appear to itself) to combine and to apply the phenomena of the association ; and as these derive all their reality from the primary sensations ; and the sensations again all their reality from the impressions *ab extra* ; a God not visible, audible, or tangible, can exist only in the sounds and letters that form His name and attributes. If in ourselves there be no such faculties as those of the will, and the scientific reason, we must either have an innate idea of them, which would overthrow the whole system, or we can have no idea at all. The process by which Hume degraded the notion of cause and effect into a blind product of delusion and habit, into the mere sensation of proceeding life (*niscus vitalis*) associated with the images of the memory ; this same process must be repeated to the equal degradation of every fundamental idea in ethics or theology.

Far, very far am I from burthening with the odium of these consequences the moral characters of those who first formed, or

have since adopted the system! It is most noticeable of the excellent and pious Hartley, that in the proofs of the existence and attributes of God, with which his second volume commences, he makes no reference to the principles or results of the first. Nay, he assumes, as his foundations, ideas which, if we embrace the doctrines of his first volume, can exist nowhere but in the vibrations of the ethereal medium common to the nerves and to the atmosphere. Indeed the whole of the second volume is, with the fewest possible exceptions, independent of his peculiar system. So true is it, that the faith, which saves and sanctifies, is a collective energy, a total act of the whole moral being; that its living *sensorium* is in the heart; and that no errors of the understanding can be morally arraigned unless they have proceeded from the heart. But whether they be such, no man can be certain in the case of another, scarcely perhaps even in his own. Hence it follows by inevitable consequence, that man may perchance determine what is a heresy; but God only can know who is a heretic. It does not, however, by any means follow, that opinions fundamentally false are harmless. A hundred causes may co-exist to form one complex antidote. Yet the sting of the adder remains venomous, though there are many who have taken up the evil thing, and it hurtled them not! Some, indeed, there seem to have been, in an unfortunate neighbour-nation at least, who have embraced this system with a full view of all its moral and religious consequences; some

“ ——— who deem themselves most free,  
When they within this gross and visible sphere  
Chain down the winged thought, scoffing assent,  
Proud in their meanness; and themselves they cheat  
With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,  
Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,  
Self-working tools, uncaused effects, and all  
Those blind omniscients, those Almighty slaves,  
Untenanted Creation of its God!”

COLERIDGE. DESTINY OF NATIONS.

Such men need discipline, not argument; they must be made better men before they can become wiser.

The attention will be more profitably employed in attempting to discover and expose the paralogisms, by the magic of which such a faith could find admission into minds framed for a nobler creed. These, it appears to me, may be all reduced to one sophism, as their common genus; the mistaking the conditions of a thing for its causes and essence; and the process by which we arrive at the knowledge of a faculty, for the faculty itself. The air I breathe

is the condition of my life, not its cause. We could never have learnt that we had eyes but by the process of seeing; yet having seen we know that the eyes must have pre-existed in order to render the process of sight possible. Let us cross-examine Hartley's scheme under the guidance of this distinction; and we shall discover, that contemporaneity (Leibnitz's *Lex Continui*) is the limit and condition of the laws of mind, itself being rather a law of matter, at least of phenomena considered as material. At the utmost, it is to thought the same as the law of gravitation is to locomotion. In every voluntary movement we first counteract gravitation, in order to avail ourselves of it. It must exist, that there may be a something to be counteracted, and which, by its reaction, aids the force that is exerted to resist it. Let us consider what we do when we leap. We first resist the gravitating power by an act purely voluntary, and then by another act, voluntary in part, we yield to it in order to light on the spot which we had previously proposed to ourselves. Now let a man watch his mind while he is composing; or, to take a still more common case, while he is trying to recollect a name; and he will find the process completely analogous. Most of my readers will have observed a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow fringed with prismatic colours on the sunny bottom of the brook; and will have noticed how the little animal wins its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary *fulcrum* for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work which relatively to each other are active and passive; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. (In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. But in common language, and especially on the subject of poetry, we appropriate the name to a superior degree of the faculty, joined to a superior voluntary control over it.)

Contemporaneity then, being the common condition of all the laws of association, and a component element in all the *materia subjecta*, the parts of which are to be associated, must needs be co-present with all. Nothing, therefore, can be more easy than to pass off on an incautious mind this constant companion of each, for the essential substance of all. But if we appeal to our own consciousness, we shall find that even time itself, as the cause



of a particular act of association, is distinct from contemporaneity, as the condition of all association. Seeing a mackerel it may happen that I immediately think of gooseberries, because I at the same time ate mackerel with gooseberries as the sauce. The first syllable of the latter word being that which had co-existed with the image of the bird so called, I may then think of a goose. In the next moment the image of a swan may arise before me, though I had never seen the two birds together. In the two former instances, I am conscious that their co-existence in time was the circumstance that enabled me to recollect them; and equally conscious am I, that the latter was recalled to me by the joint operation of likeness and contrast. So it is with cause and effect; so too with order. So am I able to distinguish whether it was proximity in time, or continuity in space, that occasioned me to recall B. on the mention of A. They cannot be indeed separated from contemporaneity; for that would be to separate them from the mind itself. The act of consciousness is indeed identical with time considered in its essence. (I mean time *per se*, as contra-distinguished from our notion of time; for this is always blended with the idea of space, which as the contrary of time, is therefore its measure.) Nevertheless the accident of seeing two objects at the same moment, acts as a distinguishable cause from that of having seen them in the same place: and the true practical general law of association is this; that whatever makes certain parts of a total impression more vivid or distinct than the rest, will determine the mind to recall these in preference to others equally linked together by the common condition of contemporaneity, or (what I deem a more appropriate and philosophical term) of continuity. But the will itself by confining and intensifying\* the attention may arbitrarily give vividness or distinctness to any object whatsoever; and from hence we may deduce the uselessness, if not the absurdity, of certain recent schemes which promise an artificial memory, but which in reality can only produce a confusion and debasement of the fancy. Sound logic, as the habitual subordination of the individual to the species, and of the species to the genus; philosophical knowledge of facts under the relation of cause and effect; a cheerful and communicative

\* I am aware that this word occurs neither in Johnson's Dictionary nor in any classical writer. But the word, "to intend," which Newton and others before him employ in this sense, is now so completely appropriated to another meaning, that I could not use it without ambiguity: while to paraphrase the sense, as by *render intense*, would often break up the

sentence and destroy that harmony of the position of the words with the logical position of the thoughts, which is a beauty in all composition, and more especially desirable in a close philosophical investigation. I have therefore hazarded the word, *intensify*; though, I confess, it sounds uncouth to my own ear.

temper that disposes us to notice the similarities and contrasts of things, that we may be able to illustrate the one by the other; a quiet conscience; a condition free from anxieties: sound health, and above all (as far as relates to passive remembrance) a healthy digestion; these are the best, these are the only Arts of Memory.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

The system of Dualism introduced by Des Cartes—Refined first by Spinoza and afterwards by Leibnitz into the doctrine of Harmonia præstabilita—Hylozoism—Materialism—Neither of these systems, on any possible theory of association, supplies or supersedes a theory of perception, or explains the formation of the associable.

TO the best of my knowledge Des Cartes was the first philosopher who introduced the absolute and essential heterogeneity of the soul as intelligence, and the body as matter. The assumption and the form of speaking have remained, though the denial of all other properties to matter but that of extension, on which denial the whole system of dualism is grounded, has been long exploded. For since impenetrability is intelligible only as a mode of resistance, its admission places the essence of *matter* in an act or power which it possesses in common with *spirit*, and body and spirit are therefore no longer absolutely heterogeneous, but may, without any absurdity, be supposed to be different modes, or degrees in perfection, of a common substratum. To this possibility, however, it was not the fashion to advert. The soul was a *thinking* substance, and the body a *space-filling* substance. Yet the apparent action of each on the other pressed heavy on the philosopher on the one hand, and no less heavily on the other hand pressed the evident truth that the law of causality holds only between homogeneous things, *i.e.*, things having some common property, and cannot extend from one world into another, its opposite. A close analysis evinced it to be no less absurd than the question whether a man's affection for his wife lay north-east or south-west of the love he bore towards his child? Leibnitz's doctrine of a pre-established harmony, which he certainly borrowed from Spinoza, who had himself taken the hint from Des Cartes' animal machines, was, in its common interpretation, too strange to survive the inventor, too repugnant to our common sense (which is not indeed entitled to a judicial voice in the courts of scientific philosophy, but whose whispers still exert a strong secret influence). Even Wolf, the admirer and illustrious systematizer of the Leibnitzian doctrine, contents himself with de-

fending the possibility of the idea, but does not adopt it as a part of the edifice.

The hypothesis of Hylozoism, on the other side, is the death of all rational physiology, and indeed of all physical science; for that requires a limitation of terms, and cannot consist with the arbitrary power of multiplying attributes by occult qualities. Besides, it answers no purpose; unless, indeed, a difficulty can be solved by multiplying it, or that we can acquire a clearer notion of our soul by being told that we have a million souls, and that every atom of our bodies has a soul of its own. Far more prudent is it to admit the difficulty once for all, and then let it lie at rest. There is a sediment indeed at the bottom of the vessel, but all the water above it is clear and transparent. The Hylozoist only shakes it up, and renders the whole turbid.

But it is not either the nature of man or the duty of the philosopher to despair concerning any important problem, until, as in the squaring of the circle, the impossibility of a solution has been demonstrated. How the *esse* assumed as originally distinct from the *scire*, can ever unite itself with it; how *being* can transform itself into a *knowing*, becomes conceivable on one only condition; namely, if it can be shown that the *vis representativa*, or the Sentient, is itself a species of being, i.e., either as a property or attribute, or as an hypostasis or self-subsistence. The former is indeed the assumption of materialism; a system which could not but be patronized by the philosopher, if only it actually performed what it promises. But how any affection from without can metamorphose itself into perception or will, the materialist has hitherto left not only as incomprehensible as he found it, but has aggravated it into a comprehensible absurdity. For, grant that an object from without could act upon the conscious self as on a consubstantial object; yet such an affection could only engender something homogeneous with itself. Motion could only propagate motion. Matter has no inward. We remove one surface, but to meet with another. We can but divide a particle into particles; and each atom comprehends in itself the properties of the material universe. Let any reflecting mind make the experiment of explaining to itself the evidence of our sensuous intuitions, from the hypothesis that in any given perception there is a something which has been communicated to it by an impact or an impression *ab extra*. In the first place, by the impact on the percipient or *ens representans*, not the object itself, but only its action or effect, will pass into the same. Not the iron tongue, but its vibrations, pass into the metal of the bell. Now, in our immediate perception, it

is not the mere power or act of the object, but the object itself, which is immediately present. We might indeed attempt to explain this result by a chain of deductions and conclusions; but that, first, the very faculty of deducing and concluding would equally demand an explanation; and, secondly, that there exists in fact no such intermediation by logical notions, such as those of cause and effect. It is the object itself, not the product of a syllogism, which is present to our consciousness. Or would we explain this supervention of the object to the sensation, by a productive faculty set in motion by an impulse; still the transition into the percipient of the object itself, from which the impulse proceeded, assumes a power that can permeate and wholly possess the soul :

" And like a God by spiritual art,  
Be all in all, and all in every part."

COWLEY.

And how came the percipient here? And what is become of the wonder-promising Matter, that was to perform all these marvels by force of mere figure, weight, and motion? The most consistent proceeding of the dogmatic materialist is to fall back into the common rank of *soul-and-bodyists*; to affect the mysterious, and declare the whole process a revelation given and not to be understood, which it would be profane to examine too closely. *Datur non intelligitur.* But a revelation unconfirmed by miracles, and a faith not commanded by the conscience, a philosopher may venture to pass by, without suspecting himself of any irreligious tendency.

Thus as materialism has been generally taught, it is utterly unintelligible, and owes all its proselytes to the propensity so common among men, to mistake distinct images for clear conceptions, and vice versa, to reject as inconceivable whatever from its own nature is unimaginable. But as soon as it becomes intelligible, it ceases to be materialism. In order to explain *thinking*, as a material phenomenon, it is necessary to refine matter into a mere modification of intelligence, with the twofold function of *appearing* and *perceiving*. Even so did Priestley in his controversy with Price. He stripped matter of all its material properties, substituted spiritual powers, and when we expected to find a body, behold, we had nothing but its ghost! the apparition of a defunct substance!

I shall not dilate further on this subject, because it will (if God grant health and permission) be treated of at large and systematically in a work which I have many years been preparing, on the Productive Logos human and divine, with, and as an introduction

to, a full commentary on the Gospel of St. John. To make myself intelligible, as far as my present subject requires, it will be sufficient briefly to observe: 1. That all association demands and presupposes the existence of the thoughts and images to be associated. 2. The hypothesis of an external world exactly correspondent to those images or modifications of our own being, which alone (according to this system) we actually behold, is as thorough idealism as Berkeley's, inasmuch as it equally (perhaps in a more perfect degree) removes all reality and immediateness of perception, and places us in a dream-world of phantasms and spectres, the inexplicable swarm and equivocal generation of motions in our own brains. 3. That this hypothesis neither involves the explanation, nor precludes the necessity, of a mechanism and co-adequate forces in the percipient, which at the more than magic touch of the impulse from without is to create anew for itself the correspondent object. The formation of a copy is not solved by the mere pre-existence of an original; the copyist of Raffael's Transfiguration must repeat more or less perfectly the process of Raffael. It would be easy to explain a thought from the image on the retina, and that from the geometry of light, if this very light did not present the very same difficulty. We might as rationally chant the Brahmin creed of the tortoise that supported the bear, that supported the elephant, that supported the world, to the tune of "This is the house that Jack built." The *sic Deo placitum est* we all admit as the sufficient cause, and the divine goodness as the sufficient reason; but an answer to the whence? and why? is no answer to the how? which alone is the physiologist's concern. It is a mere *sophisma pigrum*, and (as Bacon hath said) the arrogance of pusillanimity, which lifts up the idol of a mortal's fancy, and commands us to fall down and worship it as a work of divine wisdom, an *ancile* or *palladium* fallen from heaven. By the very same argument the supporters of the Ptolemaic system might have rebuffed the Newtonian, and pointing to the sky with self-complacent grin,\* have appealed to common sense, whether the sun did not move and the earth stand still.

\* "And Coxcombe vanquish Berkeley with a grin." Pope.

## CHAPTER IX.

Is philosophy possible as a science, and what are its conditions?—Giordano Bruno—Literary aristocracy, or the existence of a tacit compact among the learned as a privileged order—The author's obligations to the Mystics;—to Immanuel Kant—The difference between the letter and the spirit of Kant's writings, and a vindication of prudence in the teaching of philosophy—Fichte's attempt to complete the critical system—Its partial success and ultimate failure—Obligations to Schelling; and among English writers to Saumarez.

AFTER I had successively studied in the schools of Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Hartley, and could find in neither of them an abiding place for my reason, I began to ask myself, Is a system of philosophy, as different from mere history and historic classification possible? If possible, what are its necessary conditions? I was for a while disposed to answer the first question in the negative, and to admit that the sole practicable employment for the human mind was to observe, to collect, and to classify. But I soon felt that human nature itself fought up against this wilful resignation of intellect; and as soon did I find, that the scheme taken with all its consequences and cleared of all inconsistencies was not less impracticable, than contra-natural. Assume in its full extent the position, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, without Leibnitz's qualifying *præter ipsum intellectum*, and in the same sense, in which it was understood by Hartley and Condillac: and what Hume had demonstratively deduced from this concession concerning cause and effect, will apply with equal and crushing force to all the other eleven categorical forms,\* and the logical functions corresponding to them. How can we make bricks without straw? Or build without cement? We learn all things indeed by occasion of experience; but the very facts so learnt force us inward on the antecedents, that must be pre-supposed in order to render experience itself possible. The first book of Locke's Essays (if the supposed error, which it labours to subvert, be not a mere thing of straw, an absurdity which no man ever did, or indeed ever could believe) is formed on a *Σόφισμα ἐρεπολητήσεως*, and involves the old mistake of *cum hoc : ergo, propter hoc*.

The term, Philosophy, defines itself as an affectionate seeking after the truth; but Truth is the correlative of Being. This again is no way conceivable, but by assuming as a postulate, that both are *ab initio*, identical and co-inherent; that intelligence and

\* Videlicet; quantity, quality, relation, and mode, each consisting of three subdivisions. Vide *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 95, and

106. See too the judicious remarks in Locke and Hume.

being are reciprocally each other's substrate. I presumed that this was a possible conception (i. e. that it involved no logical inconsonance) from the length of time during which the scholastic definition of the *Supreme Being*, as *actus purissimus sine ullâ potentialitate*, was received in the schools of Theology, both by the Pontifical and the Reformed divines. The early study of Plato and Plotinus, with the commentaries and the *Theologia Platonica* of the illustrious Florentine; of Proclus and Gemistius Pletho; and at a later period of the "*De Immenso et Innumerabili*," and the "*De la causa, principio et uno*," of the philosopher of Nola, who could boast of a Sir Philip Sidney, and Fulke Greville among his patrons, and whom the idolators of Rome burnt as an atheist in the year 1660; had all contributed to prepare my mind for the reception and welcoming of the *Cogito quia sum, et sum quia Cogito*; a philosophy of seeming hardihood, but certainly the most ancient, and therefore presumptively the most natural.

Why need I be afraid? Say rather how dare I be ashamed of the Teutonic theosophist, Jacob Behmen? Many, indeed, and gross were his delusions; and such as furnish frequent and ample occasion for the triumph of the learned over the poor ignorant shoemaker, who had dared think for himself. But while we remember that these delusions were such as might be anticipated from his utter want of all intellectual discipline, and from his ignorance of rational psychology, let it not be forgotten that the latter defect he had in common with the most learned theologians of his age. Neither with books nor with book-learned men was he conversant. A meek and shy quietist, his intellectual powers were never stimulated into feverous energy by crowds of proselytes, or by the ambition of proselyting. Jacob Behmen was an enthusiast in the strictest sense, as not merely distinguished, but as contra-distinguished, from a fanatic. While I in part translate the following observations from a contemporary writer of the Continent, let me be permitted to premise, that I might have transcribed the substance from memoranda of my own, which were written many years before his pamphlet was given to the world; and that I prefer another's words to my own, partly as a tribute due to priority of publication; but still more from the pleasure of sympathy in a case where coincidence only was possible.

Whoever is acquainted with the history of philosophy during the two or three last centuries, cannot but admit that there appears to have existed a sort of secret and tacit compact among the learned, not to pass beyond a certain limit in speculative

science. The privilege of free thought, so highly extolled, has at no time been held valid in actual practice, except within this limit; and not a single stride beyond it has ever been ventured without bringing obloquy on the transgressor. The few men of genius among the learned class, who actually did overstep this boundary, anxiously avoided the appearance of having so done. Therefore the true depth of science, and the penetration to the inmost centre, from which all the lines of knowledge diverge to their ever distant circumference, was abandoned to the illiterate and the simple, whom unstilled yearning, and an original ebullieny of spirit, had urged to the investigation of the indwelling and living ground of all things. These then, because their names had never been enrolled in the guilds of the learned, were persecuted by the registered livery-men as interlopers on their rights and privileges. All without distinction were branded as fanatics and phantasts; not only those whose wild and exorbitant imaginations had actually engendered only extravagant and grotesque phantasms, and whose productions were, for the most part, poor copies and gross caricatures of genuine inspiration; but the truly inspired likewise, the originals themselves! And this for no other reason, but because they were the unlearned, men of humble and obscure occupations. When, and from whom among the literati by profession, have we ever heard the divine doxology repeated, "*I thank Thee O Father! Lord of Heaven and Earth! because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*"\* No! the haughty priests of learning, not only banished from the schools and marts of science all who had dared draw living waters from the fountain, but drove them out of the very Temple, which meantime the buyers, and sellers, and money-changers were suffered to make a den of thieves.

And yet it would not be easy to discover any substantial ground for this contemptuous pride in those literati, who have most distinguished themselves by their scorn of Behmen, De Thoyras, George Fox, &c.; unless it be that they could write orthographically, make smooth periods, and had the fashions of authorship almost literally at their fingers' ends, while the latter, in simplicity of soul, made their words immediate echoes of their feelings. Hence the frequency of those phrases among them, which have been mistaken for pretences to immediate inspiration; as for instance, "*It was delivered unto me;*" "*I strove not to speak;*" "*I said, I will be silent;*" "*but the word was in my heart as a burning fire;*" "*and I could not forbear.*" Hence too the unwillingness to

\* Luke, x. 21.



give offence; hence the foresight, and the dread of the clamours which would be raised against them, so frequently avowed in the writings of these men, and expressed, as was natural, in the words of the only book with which they were familiar. "Woe is me that I am become a man of strife, and a man of contention; I love peace: the souls of men are dear unto me: yet because I seek for light every one of them doth curse me!" O! it requires deeper feeling and a stronger imagination than belong to most of those to whom reasoning and fluent expression have been as a trade learnt in boyhood, to conceive with what might, with what inward strivings and commotion, the conception of a new and vital truth takes possession of an uneducated man of genius. His meditations are almost inevitably employed on the eternal or the everlasting; for "the world is not his friend, nor the world's law." Need we, then, be surprised that, under an excitement at once so strong and so unusual, the man's body should sympathise with the struggles of his mind; or that he should at times be so far deluded as to mistake the tumultuous sensations of his nerves, and the co-existing spectres of his fancy, as parts or symbols of the truths which were opening on him? It has indeed been plausibly observed, that in order to derive any advantage, or to collect any intelligible meaning from the writings of these ignorant Mystics, the reader must bring with him a spirit and judgment superior to that of the writers themselves:

"And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?"

PARADISE REGAINED.

—A sophism, which I fully agree with Warburton, is unworthy of Milton; how much more so of the awful Person in whose mouth he has placed it? One assertion I will venture to make, as suggested by my own experience, that there exist folios on the human understanding, and the nature of man, which would have a far juster claim to their high rank and celebrity, if in the whole huge volume there could be found as much fulness of heart and intellect as burst forth in many a simple page of George Fox, Jacob Behmen, and even of Behmen's commentator, the pious and fervid William Law.

The feeling of gratitude, which I cherish towards these men, has caused me to digress further than I had foreseen or proposed; but to have passed them over in an historical sketch of my literary life and opinions, would have seemed to me like the denial of a debt, the concealment of a boon. For the writings of these Mystics acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being

imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the heart in the head; gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentiment, that all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of death, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled, from some root to which I had not penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter. If they were too often a moving cloud of smoke to me by day, yet they were always a pillar of fire throughout the night, during my wanderings through the wilderness of doubt, and enabled me to skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of utter unbelief. That the system is capable of being converted into an irreligious Pantheism, I well know. The Ethics of Spinoza may, or may not, be an instance. But at no time could I believe, that *in itself* and *essentially* it is incompatible with religion, natural, or revealed: and now I am most thoroughly persuaded of the contrary. The writings of the illustrious sage of Königsberg, the founder of the Critical Philosophy, more than any other work, at once invigorated and disciplined my understanding. The originality, the depth, and the compression of the thoughts; the novelty and subtlety, yet solidity and importance, of the distinctions; the adamant chain of the logic; and I will venture to add (paradox as it will appear to those who have taken their notion of Immanuel Kant, from Reviewers and Frenchmen) the clearness and evidence of the Critique of the Pure Reason; of the Judgment; of the Metaphysical Elements of Natural Philosophy, and of his Religion within the bounds of Pure Reason, took possession of me as with a giant's hand. After fifteen years familiarity with them, I still read these and all his other productions with undiminished delight and increasing admiration. The few passages that remained obscure to me, after due efforts of thought, (as the chapter on original apperception), and the apparent contradictions which occur, I soon found were hints and insinuations referring to ideas, which Kant either did not think it prudent to avow, or which he considered as consistently left behind in a pure analysis, not of human nature *in toto*, but of the speculative intellect alone. Here therefore he was constrained to commence at the point of reflection, or natural consciousness: while in his moral system he was permitted to assume a higher ground (the autonomy of the will) as a postulate deducible from the unconditional command, or (in the technical language of his school) the categorical imperative, of the conscience. He had been in imminent danger of persecution during the reign of the late king of Prussia, that

strange compound of lawless debauchery and priest-ridden superstition: and it is probable that he had little inclination, in his old age, to act over again the fortunes and hair-breadth escapes of Wolf. The expulsion of the first among Kant's disciples, who attempted to complete his system, from the university of Jena, with the confiscation and prohibition of the obnoxious work by the joint efforts of the courts of Saxony and Hanover, supplied experimental proof that the venerable old man's caution was not groundless. In spite therefore of his own declarations, I could never believe it was possible for him to have meant no more by his *Noumenon*, or *Thing in Itself*, than his mere words express; or that in his own conception he confined the whole plastic power to the forms of the intellect, leaving for the external cause, for the *materiale* of our sensations, a matter without form, which is doubtless inconceivable. I entertained doubts likewise, whether in his own mind, he even laid *all* the stress, which he appears to do, on the moral postulates.

An idea, in the highest sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a *symbol*; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction. *Φώνησε Συνορισιν*: and for those who could not pierce through this symbolic husk, his writings were not intended. Questions which cannot be fully answered without exposing the respondent to personal danger, are not entitled to a fair answer; and yet to say this openly would in many cases furnish the very advantage which the adversary is insidiously seeking after. Veracity does not consist in saying, but in the intention of communicating truth; and the philosopher who cannot utter the whole truth without conveying falsehood, and at the same time, perhaps, exciting the most malignant passions, is constrained to express himself either mythically or equivocally. When Kant therefore was importuned to settle the disputes of his commentators himself, by declaring what he meant, how could he decline the honours of martyrdom with less offence, than by simply replying, "I meant what I said, and at the age of near fourscore, I have something else, and more important to do, than to write a commentary on my own works."

Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, or Lore of Ultimate Science, was to add the key-stone of the arch: and by commencing with an act, instead of a thing or substance, Fichte assuredly gave the first mortal blow to Spinozism, as taught by Spinoza himself; and supplied the idea of a system truly metaphysical, and of a *meta-physique* truly systematic: (i. e. having its spring and principle within itself.) But this fundamental idea he overbuilt with a

heavy mass of mere notions, and psychological acts of arbitrary reflection. Thus his theory degenerated into a crude *egoismus*,\* a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to Nature, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy: while his religion consisted in the assumption of a mere *ordo ordinans*, which we were permitted *exoterice* to call God; and his ethics in an ascetic, and almost monkish, mortification of the natural passions and desires.

In Schelling's *Natur-Philosophie*, and the *System des transcendentalen Idealismus*, I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do.

I have introduced this statement as appropriate to the narrative nature of this sketch; yet rather in reference to the work which I have announced in a preceding page, than to my present subject. It would be but a mere act of justice to myself, were I to warn my future readers, that an identity of thought, or even similarity of phrase will not be at all times a certain proof that the passage has been borrowed from Schelling, or that the conceptions were originally learnt from him. In this instance, as in the dramatic lectures of Schlegel to which I have before alluded, from the same motive of self-defence against the charge of plagiarism, many of the most striking resemblances, indeed all the main and fundamental ideas, were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a single page of the German Philosopher; and I might indeed affirm with truth, before the more important works of Schelling had been written, or at least made

\* The following burlesque on the Fichtean Egoismus may, perhaps, be amusing to the few who have studied the system, and to those who are unacquainted with it, may convey as tolerable a likeness of Fichte's idealism as can be expected from an avowed caricature.

The categorical imperative, or the annunciation of the new Teutonic God, 'EIGENKALIAN, a dithyrambic Ode, by QUERKOPF VON KLUBERICK, Grammarian, and Subrector in Gymnasio. \*\*\*\*

*Eu! Dei vices gerens, ipse Divus,*  
(Speak English, Friend!) the God Imperatīvus,

Here on this market-cross aloud I cry:  
I, I, I! I myself I?

The form and the substance, the what and the why,

The when and the where, and the low and the high,

The inside and outside, the earth and the sky,

I, you, and he, and he, you and I,

All souls and all bodies are I myself I!

All I itself I!

(Fools! a truce with this starting!)

All my I! all my I!

He's a heretic dog who but adds Betty Martin!

Thus cried the God with high imperial tone:  
In robe of stiffest state, that scoff'd at beauty,

A pronoun-verb imperative he shone—  
Then substantive and plural-singular grown

He thus spake on! Behold in I alone  
(For ethics boast a syntax of their own)

Or if in ye, yet as I doth depute ye,  
In O! I, you, the vocative of duty!

I of the world a whole Lexicon the root!  
Of the whole universe of touch, sound, sight

The genitive and ablative to boot:

The accusative of wrong, the nom'native of right,

And in all cases the case absolute!

Self-construed, I all other moods decline:

Imperative, from nothing we derive us;

Yet as a super-postulate of mine,

Unconstrued antecedence I assign

To X, Y, Z, the God Infinitivus!

public. Nor is this coincidence at all to be wondered at. We had studied in the same school; been disciplined by the same preparatory philosophy, namely, the writings of Kant; we had both equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno; and Schelling has lately, and, as of recent acquisition, avowed that same affectionate reverence for the labours of Behmen, and other mystics, which I had formed at a much earlier period. The coincidence of Schelling's system with certain general ideas of Behmen, he declares to have been mere coincidence; while my obligations have been more direct. He needs give to Behmen only feelings of sympathy; while I owe him a debt of gratitude. God forbid! that I should be suspected of a wish to enter into a rivalry with Schelling for the honours so unequivocally his right, not only as a great and original genius, but as the founder of the Philosophy of Nature, and as the most successful improver of the Dynamic\* System which, begun by Bruno, was re-introduced (in a more philosophical form, and freed from all its impurities and visionary accompaniments) by Kant; in whom it was the native and necessary growth of his own system. Kant's followers, however, on whom (for the greater part) their master's cloak had fallen without, or with a very scanty portion of, his spirit, had adopted his dynamic ideas, only as a more refined species of mechanics. With exception of one

\* It would be an act of high and almost criminal injustice to pass over in silence the name of Mr. Richard Saumarez, a gentleman equally well known as a medical man and as a philanthropist, but who demands notice on the present occasion as the author of "a new System of Physiology" in two volumes octavo, published 1797; and in 1812 of "An Examination of the natural and artificial Systems of Philosophy which now prevail" in one volume octavo, entitled, "The Principles of physiological and physical Science." The latter work is not quite equal to the former in style or arrangement; and there is a greater necessity of distinguishing the principles of the author's philosophy from his conjectures concerning colour, the atmospheric matter, comets, &c. which whether just or erroneous are by no means necessary consequences of that philosophy. Yet even in this department of this volume, which I regard as comparatively the inferior work, the reasonings by which Mr Saumarez invalidates the immanence of an infinite power in any finite substance are the offspring of no common mind; and the experiment on the expansibility of the air is at least plausible and highly ingenious. But the merit, which will secure both to the book and to the writer a high and honorable name with posterity, consists in the masterly force of reasoning,

and the copiousness of induction, with which he has assailed, and (in my opinion) subverted the tyranny of the mechanic system in physiology; established not only the existence of final causes, but their necessity and efficiency in every system that merits the name of philosophical; and substituting life and progressive power, for the contradictory *inert force*, has a right to be known and remembered as the first instaurator of the dynamic philosophy in England. The author's views, as far as concerns himself, are unborrowed and completely his own, as he neither possessed, nor do his writings discover, the least acquaintance with the works of Kant, in which the germs of the philosophy exist; and his volumes were published many years before the full development of these germs by Schelling. Mr. Saumarez's detection of the Braunionian system was no light or ordinary service at the time; and I scarcely remember in any work on any subject a confutation so thoroughly satisfactory. It is sufficient at this time to have stated the fact; as in the preface to the work, which I have already announced on the *Logos*, I have exhibited in detail the merits of this writer, and genuine philosopher, who needed only have taken his foundations somewhat deeper and wider to have superseded a considerable part of my labours.

or two fundamental ideas, which cannot be withheld from Fichte, to Schelling we owe the completion, and the most important victories, of this revolution in philosophy. To me it will be happiness and honour enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes. Whether a work is the offspring of a man's own spirit, and the product of original thinking, will be discovered by those who are its sole legitimate judges, by better tests than the mere reference to dates. For readers in general, let whatever shall be found in this or any future work of mine that resembles, or coincides with, the doctrines of my German predecessor, though contemporary, be wholly attributed to him: provided, that the absence of distinct references to his books, which I could not at all times make with truth as designating citations or thoughts actually derived from him; and which, I trust, would, after this general acknowledgment be superfluous; be not charged on me as an ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism. I have not indeed (*eheu! res angusta domi!*) been hitherto able to procure more than two of his books, viz. the 1st volume of his collected Tracts, and his System of Transcendental Idealism; to which, however, I must add a small pamphlet against Fichte, the spirit of which was to my feelings painfully incongruous with the principles, and which (with the usual allowance afforded to an antithesis) displayed the love of wisdom rather than the wisdom of love. I regard truth as a divine ventriloquist: I care not from whose mouth the sounds are supposed to proceed, if only the words are audible and intelligible. "Albeit, I must confess to be half in doubt, whether I should bring it forth or no, it being so contrary to the eye of the world, and the world so potent in most men's hearts, that I shall endanger either not to be regarded or not to be understood."—MILTON: *Reason of Church Government*.

And to conclude the subject of citation, with a cluster of citations, which, as taken from books not in common use, may contribute to the reader's amusement, as a voluntary before a sermon. "*Dolet mihi quidem deliciis literarum inescatos subito jam homines adeo esse, præsertim qui Christianos se profitentur, et legere nisi quod ad delectationem facit, sustineant nihil: unde et disciplinæ severiores et philosophia ipsa jam fere prorsus etiam a doctis negliguntur. Quod quidem propositum studiorum, nisi mature corrigitur, tam magnum rebus incommodum dabit, quam dedit Barbaries olim. Pertinax res Barbaries est, fateor: sed minus potest tamen, quam illa mollities et persuasa prudentia literarum, quæ si ratione caret,*

*sapientiæ virtutisque specie mortales miserè circumducit. Succedet igitur, ut arbitror, haud ita multo post, pro rusticanâ seculi nostri ruditate captatix illa communi-loquentia robur animi virilis omne, omnem virtutem masculam profligatura, nisi cavetur.\** A too prophetic remark, which has been in fulfilment from the year 1680, to the present 1815. N.B. By *persuasa prudentia*, Grynæus means self-complacent common sense as opposed to science and philosophic reason.

*"Est medius ordo et velut equestris Ingeniorum quidem sagacium et rebus humanis commodorum, non tamen in primam magnitudinem patentium. Eorum hominum, ut ita dicam, major annona est. Sedulum esse, nihil temerè loqui, assuescere labori, et imagine prudentiæ et modestiæ tegere angustiores partes captis dum exercitationem et usum, quo isti in civilibus rebus pollent, pro natura et magnitudine ingenii plerique accipiunt."*—BARCLAY ARGENTIS, p. 71.

"As therefore, physicians are many times forced to leave such methods of curing as themselves know to be fittest, and being over-ruled by the sick man's impatience, are fain to try the best they can: in like sort, considering how the case doth stand with the present age, full of tongue and weak of brain, behold we would (*if our subject permitted it*) yield to the stream thereof. That way we would be contented to prove our thesis, which being the worse in itself, notwithstanding is now by reason of common imbecility the fitter and likelier to be brooked."—HOOKER.

If this fear could be rationally entertained in the controversial age of Hooker, under the then robust discipline of the scholastic logic, pardonably may a writer of the present times anticipate a scanty audience for abstrusest themes, and truths that can neither be communicated or received without effort of thought, as well as patience of attention.

"Che s'io non erro al calcolar de' punti,  
Par ch' Asinina Stella a noi predomini,  
E'l Somaro e'l Castron si sian congiunti.  
Il tempo d'Apuleio più non si nomini:  
Che se allora un sol Huom sembrava un Asino,  
Mille Asini a' miei di rassembran Huomini!"

DI SALVATOR ROSA SATIR. I. l. 10.

\* SIMON GRYNÆUS, *candido lectori*, prefixed to the Latin translation of Plato by Marsilius Ficinus. Lugduni, 1557.

## CHAPTER X.

A chapter of digression and anecdotes, as an interlude preceding that on the nature and genesis of the imagination or plastic power—On pedantry and pedantic expressions—Advice to young authors respecting publication—Various anecdotes of the author's literary life, and the progress of his opinions in religion and politics.

*Esemplastic.* The word is not in Johnson, nor have I met with it elsewhere." Neither have I! I constructed it myself from the Greek words, *εἰς ἓν πλάττειν* i.e. to shape into one; because, having to convey a new sense, I thought that a new term would both aid the recollection of my meaning, and prevent its being confounded with the usual import of the word, imagination. "But this is pedantry!" Not necessarily so, I hope. If I am not mis-informed, pedantry consists in the use of words unsuitable to the time, place, and company. The language of the market would be in the schools as pedantic, though it might not be reprobated by that name, as the language of the schools in the market. The mere man of the world, who insists that no other terms but such as occur in common conversation should be employed in a scientific disquisition, and with no greater precision, is as truly a pedant as the man of letters, who either over-rating the acquirements of his auditors, or misled by his own familiarity with technical or scholastic terms, converses at the wine-table with his mind fixed on his museum or laboratory; even though the latter pedant instead of desiring his wife to make the tea, should bid her add to the *quant. suff.* of *thea Sinensis* the oxyd of hydrogen saturated with caloric. To use the colloquial (and in truth somewhat vulgar) metaphor, if the pedant of the cloister, and the pedant of the lobby, both smell equally of the shop, yet the odour from the Russian binding of good old authentic-looking folios and quartos is less annoying than the steams from the tavern or bagnio. Nay, though the pedantry of the scholar should betray a little ostentation, yet a well-conditioned mind would more easily, methinks, tolerate the fox brush of learned vanity, than the *sans culotterie* of a contemptuous ignorance, that assumes a merit from mutilation in the self-consoling sneer at the pompous incumbrance of tails.

The first lesson of philosophic discipline is to wean the student's attention from the degrees of things, which alone form the vocabulary of common life, and to direct it to the kind abstracted from degree. Thus the chemical student is taught not to be startled at disquisitions on the heat in ice, or on latent and fixible



light. In such discourse the instructor has no other alternative than either to use old words with new meanings (the plan adopted by Darwin in his *Zoonomia*;) or to introduce new terms, after the example of Linnæus, and the framers of the present chemical nomenclature. The latter mode is evidently preferable, were it only that the former demands a twofold exertion of thought in one and the same act. For the reader (or hearer) is required not only to learn and bear in mind the new definition; but to unlearn, and keep out of his view, the old and habitual meaning; a far more difficult and perplexing task, and for which the mere semblance of eschewing pedantry seems to me an inadequate compensation. Where indeed, it is in our power to recall an appropriate term that had without sufficient reason become obsolete, it is doubtless a less evil to restore than to coin anew. Thus to express in one word all that appertains to the perception considered as passive, and merely recipient, I have adopted from our elder classics the word *sensuous*; because *sensual* is not at present used, except in a bad sense, or at least as a moral distinction, while *sensitive* and *sensible* would each convey a different meaning. Thus too I have followed Hooker, Sanderson, Milton, &c. in designating the immediateness of any act or object of knowledge by the word *intuition*, used sometimes subjectively, sometimes objectively, even as we use the word *thought*; now as *the* thought, or act of thinking, and now as *a* thought, or the object of our reflection; and we do this without confusion or obscurity. The very words, *objective* and *subjective*, of such constant recurrence in the schools of yore, I have ventured to re-introduce, because I could not so briefly or conveniently, by any more familiar terms, distinguish the *percipere* from the *percipi*. Lastly, I have cautiously discriminated the terms, the reason, and the understanding, encouraged and confirmed by the authority of our genuine divines, and philosophers, before the Revolution.

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“ both life, and sense,  
Fancy, and understanding: whence the soul  
Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
Discursive or intuitive. Discourse\*  
Is oftest your’s, the latter most is our’s,  
Differing but in *degree*, in *kind* the same.”

PARADISE LOST, Book V.

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\* But for sundry notes on Shakespeare, &c. which have fallen in my way, I should have deemed it unnecessary to observe, that discourse here, or elsewhere, does not mean what we now call discoursing; but the discussion of

the mind, the processes of generalization and subsumption, of deduction and conclusion. Thus Philosophy has hitherto been discursive; while Geometry is always and essentially intuitive.

I say, that I was confirmed by authority so venerable: for I had previous and higher motives in my own conviction of the importance, nay, of the necessity of the distinction, as both an indispensable condition and a vital part of all sound speculation in metaphysics, ethical or theological. To establish this distinction was one main object of *The Friend*; if even in a biography of my own literary life I can with propriety refer to a work which was printed rather than published, or so published that it had been well for the unfortunate author if it had remained in manuscript! I have even at this time bitter cause for remembering that, which a number of my subscribers have but a trifling motive for forgetting. This effusion might have been spared; but I would feign flatter myself that the reader will be less austere than an oriental professor of the bastinado, who, during an attempt to extort *per argumentum baculinum* a full confession from a culprit, interrupted his outcry of pain by reminding him, that it was "a mere digression!" "All this noise, Sir! is nothing to the point, and no sort of answer to my questions!" "Ah! but" (replied the sufferer) "it is the most pertinent reply in nature to your blows."

An imprudent man of common goodness of heart, cannot but wish to turn even his imprudences to the benefit of others, as far as this is possible. If therefore any one of the readers of this semi-narrative should be preparing or intending a periodical work, I warn him, in the first place, against trusting in the number of names on his subscription list. For he cannot be certain that the names were put down by sufficient authority; or should that be ascertained, it still remains to be known whether they were not extorted by some over zealous friend's importunity; whether the subscriber had not yielded his name merely from want of courage to answer, no! and with the intention of dropping the work as soon as possible. One gentleman procured me nearly a hundred names for *The Friend*, and not only took frequent opportunity to remind me of his success in his canvass, but laboured to impress my mind with the sense of the obligation, I was under to the subscribers; for (as he very pertinently admonished me) "fifty-two shillings a year was a large sum to be bestowed on one individual, where there were so many objects of charity with strong claims to the assistance of the benevolent." Of these hundred patrons ninety threw up the publication before the fourth number, without any notice; though it was well known to them, that in consequence of the distance, and the slowness and irregularity of the conveyance, I was compelled to lay in a stock of stamped paper for at least eight weeks beforehand; each

sheet of which stood me in five-pence previous to its arrival at my printer's; though the subscription money was not to be received till the twenty-first week after the commencement of the work; and lastly, though it was in nine cases out of ten impracticable for me to receive the money for two or three numbers without paying an equal sum for the postage.

In confirmation of my first caveat, I will select one fact among many. On my list of subscribers, among a considerable number of names equally flattering, was that of an Earl of Cork, with his address. He might as well have been an Earl of Bottle for aught I knew of him, who had been content to reverence the peerage *in abstracto*, rather than *in concretis*. Of course The Friend was regularly sent as far, if I remember right, as the eighteenth number: i.e., till a fortnight before the subscription was to be paid. And lo! just at this time I received a letter from his lordship, reproving me in language far more lordly than courteous for my impudence in directing my pamphlets to him, who knew nothing of me or my work! Seventeen or eighteen numbers of which, however, his lordship was pleased to retain, probably for the culinary or the post-culinary conveniences of his servants.

Secondly, I warn all others from the attempt to deviate from the ordinary mode of publishing a work by the trade. I thought, indeed, that to the purchaser it was indifferent whether thirty per cent. of the purchase-money went to the booksellers or to the government; and that the convenience of receiving the work by the post at his own door would give the preference to the latter. It is hard, I own, to have been labouring for years in collecting and arranging the materials; to have spent every shilling that could be spared after the necessities of life had been furnished, in buying books, or in journies for the purpose of consulting them, or of acquiring facts at the fountain head; then to buy the paper, pay for the printing, &c., all at least fifteen per cent. beyond what the trade would have paid; and then after all to give thirty per cent., not of the net profits, but of the gross results of the sale, to a man who has merely to give the books shelf or warehouse room, and permit his apprentice to hand them over the counter to those who may ask for them; and this too copy by copy, although if the work be on any philosophical or scientific subject, it may be years before the edition is sold off. All this, I confess, must seem a hardship, and one, to which the products of industry in no other mode of exertion are subject. Yet even this is better, far better, than to attempt in any way to unite the functions of author and publisher. But the most prudent mode is to sell the

copyright, at least of one or more editions, for the most that the trade will offer. By few only can a large remuneration be expected; but fifty pounds and ease of mind are of more real advantage to a literary man, than the chance of five hundred with the certainty of insult and degrading anxieties. I shall have been grievously misunderstood if this statement should be interpreted as written with the desire of detracting from the character of booksellers or publishers. The individuals did not make the laws and customs of their trade, but, as in every other trade, take them as they find them. Till the evil can be proved to be removable and without the substitution of an equal or greater inconvenience, it were neither wise or manly even to complain of it. But to use it as a pretext for speaking, or even for thinking or feeling, unkindly or opprobriously of the tradesmen, as individuals, would be something worse than unwise or even than unmanly; it would be immoral and calumnious! My motives point in a far different direction and to far other objects, as will be seen in the conclusion of the chapter.

A learned and exemplary old clergyman, who many years ago went to his reward followed by the regrets and blessings of his flock, published at his own expense two volumes octavo, entitled, *A New Theory of Redemption*. The work was most severely handled in the *Monthly or Critical Review*, I forget which, and this unprovoked hostility became the good old man's favourite topic of conversation among his friends. Well! (he used to exclaim) in the second edition I shall have an opportunity of exposing both the ignorance and the malignity of the anonymous critic. Two or three years however passed by without any tidings from the bookseller, who had undertaken the printing and publication of the work, and who was perfectly at his ease, as the author was known to be a man of large property. At length the accounts were written for; and in the course of a few weeks they were presented by the rider for the house, in person. My old friend put on his spectacles, and holding the scroll with no very firm hand, began "*Paper, so much* : Oh, moderate enough—not at all beyond my expectation! *Printing, so much* : well! moderate enough! *Stitching, covers, advertisements, carriage, &c., so much.*" —Still nothing amiss. *Selleridge* (for orthography is no necessary part of a bookseller's literary acquirements) £3 3s. "Bless me! only three guineas for the what d'y'e call it? the *selleridge*?" "No more, sir," replied the rider. "Nay, but that is *too moderate*," rejoined my old friend. "Only three guineas for *selling* a thousand copies of a work in two volumes?" „Oh, sir!" cries the

young traveller, "you have mistaken the word. There have been none of them *sold*; they have been sent back from London long ago; and this £3 3s. is for the *cellarage*, or warehouse-room in our book *cellar*." The work was in consequence preferred from the ominous cellar of the publisher's to the author's garret; and on presenting a copy to an acquaintance, the old gentleman used to tell the anecdote with great humour and still greater good nature.

With equal lack of worldly knowledge, I was a far more than equal sufferer for it, at the very outset of my authorship. Toward the close of the first year from the time that, in an inauspicious hour, I left the friendly cloisters and the happy grove of quiet, ever honoured Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry philanthropists and anti-polemists to set on foot a periodical work, entitled *The Watchman*, that (according to the general motto of the work) *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only fourpence. Accordingly with a flaming prospectus, "Knowledge is Power," "To cry the state of the political atmosphere," and so forth, I set off on a tour to the north, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon might be seen on me. For I was at that time and long after, though a Trinitarian (*i.e.*, *ad normam Platonis*) in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a *psilanthropist*, one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real Son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the Resurrection rather than on the Crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself, then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of (what I believed to be) the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of myself at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow-chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth,

that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundry poker. O that face! a face κατ' ἐμφασιν! I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, *pingui-nitescens*, cut in a straight line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eyebrows, that looked like a scorched after-math from a last week's shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of colour and lustre, with the coarse yet glib cordage that I suppose he called his hair, and which with a bend inward at the nape of the neck (the only approach to flexure in his whole figure) slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance lank, dark, very hard, and with strong, perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a used gridiron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the thorough-bred, a true lover of liberty, and (I was informed) had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in the Revelations, *that spoke like a dragon*. A person to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first stroke in the new business I had undertaken of an author, yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion after some imperfect sentences and a multitude of hums and haas abandoned the clause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros, the tallow-chandler, varying my notes through the whole gamut of eloquence from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied; and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millennium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out of the Religious Musings:

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Such delights,  
As float to earth, permitted visitants!  
When in some hour of solemn jubilee  
The massive gates of Paradise are thrown  
Wide open: and forth come in fragments wild  
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,  
And odours snatched from beds of Amaranth,  
And they that from the crystal river of life  
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales.

RELIGIOUS MUSINGS.

My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though (as I was afterwards told on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial) it was a melting day with him. "And what, sir," he said, after a short pause,

"might the cost be?" "Only fourpence," (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal bathos of that fourpence)! "only fourpence, sir, each number, to be published on every eighth day." "That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much did you say there was to be for the money?" "Thirty-two pages, sir! large octavo, closely printed." "Thirty and two pages? Bless me, why except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that's more than I ever reads, sir! all the year round. I am as great a one as any man in Brummagem, sir! for liberty and truth, and all them sort of things, but as to this, no offence, I hope, sir, I must beg to be excused."

So ended my first canvass. From causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester, to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and having perused it, measured me from head to foot, and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing. I presented my prospectus to him; he rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and significantly rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and, lastly, putting it into his pocket, turned his back upon me with an "over-run with these articles!" and so, without another syllable, retired into his counting-house; and, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

This, as I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him and two or three other *illuminati* of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my lifetime, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow colour (not forgetting the lamentable difficulty I have always experienced in saying no! and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing), I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bowl with salt. I was soon, however, compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which, as I had drank but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement; but

the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing-room, and opened a small packet of letters which he had received from Bristol for me, ere I sank back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately, I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is whitewashing, deathly pale, and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while one after another there dropped in the different gentlemen who had been invited to meet and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment, one of the gentlemen began the conversation with, "Have you seen a paper to day, Mr. Coleridge?" "Sir," I replied, rubbing my eyes, "I am far from convinced that a Christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest." This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather incongruous with, the purpose for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced an involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom indeed have I passed so many delightful hours as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of that laugh till an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party, have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information, and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me in the most friendly and yet most flattering expressions that the employment was neither fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet, if I had determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and (that failing) the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, indeed at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me how opposite even then my principles were to those of Jacobinism, or even of



democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the 10th and 11th numbers of *The Friend*.

From this rememberable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of *The Watchman*; yet more than half-convinced that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it; for I was at that period of my life so completely hag-ridden by the fear of being influenced by selfish motives, that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of prudence, was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings that the contrary was the dictate of duty. Accordingly I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which I have been informed, for I did not see them myself, eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But, alas! the publication of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number an essay against fast days, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and democratic patrons; for disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *philosophy*; and perhaps thinking that charity ought to begin nearest home, instead of abusing the government and the aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected of me, I levelled my attacks at "modern patriotism," and even ventured to declare my belief that, whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition, or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gagging* bills; yet the bills themselves would produce an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects the principles of which they had never bottomed, and from "pleading to the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading for them." At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education and a concurring spread of the Gospel were the indispensable conditions of any true political amelioration. Thus, by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification (but why should I say this, when in truth I cared too little for anything that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropped the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling. He was a — and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after

such delays as rendered that little worth nothing; and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month for a sum between eighty and ninety pounds, if the money had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend who attached himself to me from my first arrival in Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time, or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, or a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favourers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence (for it was part of my political creed that whoever ceased to act as an individual, by making himself a member of any society not sanctioned by his government, forfeited the rights of a citizen), a vehement anti-ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland, a more vehement anti-Gallican, and still more intensely an anti-Jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly that literature was not a profession by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself that, whatever my talents might or might not be in other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equidistant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For, happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness: "La, sir," replied poor Nanny, "why, it is only Watchmen."

I now devoted myself to poetry and the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of Hartley's Essay on Man, that I gave his name to my first-born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbour, whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighbourhood of one to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man. His conversation extended

to almost all subjects, except physics and politics; with the latter he never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy sycophants\* of that day (I here use the word sycophant in its original sense, as a wretch who flatters the prevailing party by informing against his neighbours, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited figs or fancies! for the moral application of the term it matters not which); one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the politics of the neighbourhood, uttered the following deep remark: "As to Coleridge, there is not so much harm in *him*, for he is a whirl-brain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that —; he is the dark traitor. You never hear him say a syllable on the subject."

Now that the hand of Providence has disciplined all Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings, it will with difficulty be credited how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation (the too constant attendant on party zeal!) during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Addington administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partizans, exhausted by excess of stimulation and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost, we may say, of humiliating sacrifices; and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth: and Providence, never wanting to a good work when men have donè their parts, soon provided a common focus in the cause of Spain, which made us all once more Englishmen, by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties.

\* Συκοφάντης, to shew or detect figs, the exportation of which from Attica was forbidden by the laws.

The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom; while the honest zealots of the people could not but admit that freedom itself assumed a more winning form, humanized by loyalty, and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of expatriating their hopes and fears, now disciplined by the succeeding storms, and sobered by increase of years, had been taught to prize and honour the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain too disappointment has nipped our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk, to *kern* well; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican blight on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their wolvisish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove all the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to us heaven has been just and gracious. The people of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted by all ranks to have been the main agents of our success. "*We fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.*" If then, unanimity grounded on moral feelings has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of principles. For by these all opinions must be ultimately tried; and (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions) on the knowledge of these all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar, who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke at the commencement of the American war, and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the principles exactly the same and the deductions the same; but the practical inferences almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other; yet in both equally legitimate, and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he this superiority of foresight?

Whence arose the striking difference, and in most instances, even the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by him, and by those who voted with him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke are more interesting at the present day than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs, that the same conclusion, which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other. It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact, to attribute this difference to deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmund Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to principles. He was a scientific statesman; and therefore a seer. For every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and (to men in general), the only test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful that

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" he went on refining,  
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining "

Our very sign-boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence, that there has been a Titian in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of Edmund Burke. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution, with the sentiments and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of Jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the higher and from the literary classes, may not like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my

opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher, occasioned by his charge to the Wexford grand jury, and published in the *Courier*. Be this as it may, the evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the Cerberean whelps of feud and slander, no longer walk their rounds in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous *Quidnunc*, met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighbourhood, that a spy was actually sent down from the government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but variety of these "honourable men" at the disposal of ministers: for this proved a very honest fellow. After three week's truly Indian perseverance in tracking us (for we were commonly together), during all which time seldom were we out of doors but he contrived to be within hearing (and all the while utterly unsuspected; how, indeed, could such a suspicion enter our fancies?) he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together, behind a bank at the sea-side (our favourite seat), and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied, that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy Nozy*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to listen to *that*; but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me on the road; (this occurred as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage), and passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a democrat way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of Jacobinism; but (he added) I had "plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed, though he had only put it on." I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer; and so little did I suspect the true object of my "tempter ere accuser," that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief, that the

conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident therefore prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report which, through a friendly medium, came to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the government gentleman in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length, he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and after the absolving suffrage of the gentleman honoured with the confidence of ministers, answered as follows, to the following queries:—D. Well, landlord! what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister ———, my landlord (*i. e.* the owner of the house), and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford; but I never said a word to him, or he to me. D. But do you not know that he has distributed papers and handbills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your honour! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of his haranguing and talking to knots and clusters of the inhabitants?—What are you grinning at, sir? L. Beg your honour's pardon! but I was only thinking how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard be true, your honour! they would not have understood a word he said. When our vicar was here, Dr. L. the master of the great school and Canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister ———'s; and one of the farmers that was there told us that he and the Doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together after dinner. D. Answer the question, sir! Does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope your honour an't angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one, but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the Channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your honour! I own, I have heard; I am sure, I would not wish to say ill of any body; but it is certain that I have heard—D. Speak out, man! don't be afraid; you are doing your duty to your King and government. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your honour! as how that he is a *Poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print; and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some consarn in the business.—So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and at the same time entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life.

I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of "The Task," that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on beyond the three or four first pages, and that throughout the poem the connections are frequently awkward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of bent, to the first break or fall, where its drops became audible, and it begins to form a channel; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered; to the sheep-fold; to the first cultivated plot of ground; to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath; to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the sea-port. My walks, therefore, were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombs. With my pencil and memorandum-book in my hand, I was making studies, as the artists call them, and often moulding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled "The Brook." Had I finished the work, it was my purpose in the heat of the moment to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety as containing the charts and maps with which I was to have supplied the French government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these too for a tract of coast that from Clevedon to Minehead scarcely permits the approach of a fishing-boat!

All my experience, from my first entrance into life to the present hour, is in favour of the warning maxim—that the man, who opposes *in toto* the political or religious zealots of his age, is safer from their obloquy than he who differs from them in one or two points, or perhaps only in degree. By that transfer of the feelings of private life into the discussion of public questions, which is the queen bee in the hive of party fanaticism, the partizan has more sympathy with an intemperate opposite than with a moderate friend. We now enjoy an intermission, and long may it continue! In addition to far higher and more important merits, our present Bible societies, and other numerous associations for national or charitable objects, may serve, perhaps, to carry off the superfluous activity and fervour of stirring minds in innocent



hyperboles and the bustle of management. But the poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may for a season have subsided to its roots. At least let us not be lulled into such a notion of our entire security, as not to keep watch and ward, even on our best feelings. I have seen gross intolerance shown in support of toleration; sectarian antipathy most obtrusively displayed in the promotion of an undistinguishing comprehension of sects; and acts of cruelty (I had almost said of treachery), committed in furtherance of an object vitally important to the cause of humanity; and all this by men too of naturally kind dispositions and exemplary conduct.

The magic rod of fanaticism is preserved in the very *adyta* of human nature; and needs only the re-exciting warmth of a master hand to bud forth afresh and produce the old fruits. The horror of the peasant's war in Germany, and the direful effects of the Anabaptists' tenets (which differed only from those of Jacobinism by the substitution of theological for philosophical jargon) struck all Europe for a time with affright. Yet little more than a century was sufficient to obliterate all effective memory of these events. The same principles, with similar though less dreadful consequences, were again at work from the imprisonment of the first Charles to the restoration of his son. The fanatic maxim of extirpating fanaticism by persecution produced a civil war. The war ended in the victory of the insurgents; but the temper survived, and Milton had abundant grounds for asserting, that "Presbyter was but OLD PRIEST writ large!" One good result, thank heaven! of this zealotry was the re-establishment of the Church. And now it might have been hoped, that the mischievous spirit would have been bound for a season, "and a seal set upon him that he might deceive the nation no more." But no! The ball of persecution was taken up with undiminished vigour by the persecuted. The same fanatic principle, that under the solemn oath and covenant had turned cathedrals into stables, destroyed the rarest trophies of art and ancestral piety, and hunted the brightest ornaments of learning and religion into holes and corners, now marched under episcopal banners, and having first crowded the prisons of England, emptied its whole vial of wrath on the miserable covenanters of Scotland.\* A merciful providence at length constrained both parties to join against a common enemy. A wise Government followed; and the established Church became, and now is, not only the brightest example, but our best and only sure bulwark of

\* *Laing's History of Scotland*.—*Walter Scott's Bards, ballads, &c.*

toleration! The true and indispensable bank against a new inundation of persecuting zeal—*Esto perpetua!*

A long interval of quiet succeeded; or rather, the exhaustion had produced a cold fit of the ague, which was symptomatized by indifference among the many, and a tendency to infidelity or scepticism in the educated classes. At length those feelings of disgust and hatred, which for a brief while the multitude had attached to the crimes and absurdities of sectarian and democratic fanaticism, were transferred to the oppressive privileges of the noblesse, and the luxury, intrigues, and favouritism of the Continental courts. The same principles dressed in the ostentatious garb of a fashionable philosophy once more rose triumphant and effected the French revolution. And have we not within the last three or four years had reason to apprehend that the detestable maxims and correspondent measures of the late French despotism had already bedimmed the public recollections of democratic phrensy; had drawn off to other objects the electric force of the feelings which had massed and upheld those recollections; and that a favourable concurrence of occasions was alone wanting to awaken the thunder and precipitate the lightning from the opposite quarter of the political heaven?\*

In part from constitutional indolence, which in the very hey-day of hope had kept my enthusiasm in check, but still more from the habits and influences of a classical education and academic pursuits, scarcely had a year elapsed from the commencement of my literary and political adventures before my mind sank into a state of thorough disgust and despondency, both with regard to the disputes and the parties disputant. With more than *poetic* feeling I exclaimed:

“ The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,  
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game  
They break their manacles, to wear the *name*  
Of freedom, graven on an heavier chain.  
O liberty! with profitless endeavour  
Have I pursued thee many a weary hour;  
But thou nor swell'st the victor's pomp, nor ever  
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power!  
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee  
(Nor prayer nor boastful name delays thee)  
From superstition's harpy minions  
And factious blasphemy's obscener slaves,  
Thou speedest on thy cherub pinions,  
The guide of homeless winds and playmate of the waves!”

FRANCE, a *Palinodia*.

I retired to a cottage in Somersetshire at the foot of Quantock,

\* THE FRIEND, Essay 1. Sect. III.

and devoted my thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals. Here I found myself all afloat. Doubts rushed in; broke upon me "from the fountains of the great deep," and fell "from the windows of heaven." The fontal truths of natural religion and the books of Revelation alike contributed to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat and rested. The idea of the Supreme Being appeared to me to be as necessarily implied in all particular modes of being, as the idea of infinite space in all the geometrical figures by which space is limited. I was pleased with the Cartesian opinion, that the idea of God is distinguished from all other ideas by involving its reality; but I was not wholly satisfied. I began then to ask myself, what proof I had of the outward existence of any thing? Of this sheet of paper for instance, as a thing in itself, separate from the phenomenon or image in my perception. I saw, that in the nature of things such proof is impossible; and that of all modes of being, that are not objects of the senses, the existence is assumed by a logical necessity arising from the constitution of the mind itself, by the absence of all motive to doubt it, not from any absolute contradiction in the supposition of the contrary. Still the existence of a Being, the ground of all existence, was not yet the existence of a moral creator and governor. "In the position, that all reality is either contained in the necessary being as an attribute, or exists through him as its ground, it remains undecided whether the properties of intelligence and will are to be referred to the Supreme Being in the former or only in the latter sense; as inherent attributes, or only as consequences that have existence in other things through him. Thus organization and motion are regarded as from God not in God. Were the latter the truth, then notwithstanding all the pre-eminence which must be assigned to the ETERNAL FIRST from the sufficiency, unity, and independence of his being, as the dread ground of the universe, his nature would yet fall far short of that which we are bound to comprehend in the idea of GOD. For without any knowledge or determining resolve of its own it would only be a blind necessary ground of other things and other spirits; and thus would be distinguished from the FATE of certain ancient philosophers in no respect, but that of being more definitely and intelligibly described."\*

For a very long time indeed I could not reconcile personality with infinity; and my head was with Spinoza, though my whole

\* KANT'S *einsig mögliche Beweisgrund*: *vermischte Schriften*, Zweiter Band, § 102, and 103.

heart remained with Paul and John. Yet there had dawned upon me, even before I had met with the "Critique of the Pure Reason," a certain guiding light. If the mere intellect could make no certain discovery of a holy and intelligent first cause, it might yet supply a demonstration, that no legitimate argument could be drawn from the intellect against its truth. And what is this more than St. Paul's assertion, that by wisdom (more properly translated by the powers of reasoning), no man ever arrived at the knowledge of God? What more than the sublimest, and probably the oldest, book on earth has taught us,

Silver and gold man searcheth out;  
 Bringeth the ore out of the earth, and darkness into light.  
 But where findeth he wisdom?  
 Where is the place of understanding?  
 The abyss crieth; it is not in me!  
 Ocean echoeth back; not in me!  
 Whence then cometh wisdom?  
 Where dwelleth understanding?  
 Hidden from the eyes of the living:  
 Kept secret from the fowls of heaven!  
 Hell and death answer;  
 We have heard the rumour thereof from afar!  
 God marketh out the road to it;  
 God knoweth its abiding place!  
 He beholdeth the ends of the earth;  
 He surveyeth what is beneath the heavens!  
 And as He weighed out the winds, and measured the sea,  
 And appointed laws to the rain,  
 And a path to the thunder,  
 A path to the flashes of the lightning!  
 Then did He see it,  
 And He counted it;  
 He searched into the depth thereof,  
 And with a line did He compass it round!  
 But to man He said,  
 The fear of the Lord is wisdom for THEE!  
 And to avoid evil,  
 That is thy understanding.

JOB, CHAP. 28th.

I became convinced that religion, as both the corner-stone and the key-stone of morality must have a moral origin; so far at least, that the evidence of its doctrines could not, like the truths of abstract science, be wholly independent of the will. It were, therefore, to be expected that its fundamental truth would be such as might be denied; though only, by the fool, and even by the fool from the madness of the heart alone!

The question, then, concerning our faith in the existence of a

God, not only as the ground of the universe by his essence, but as its maker and judge by his wisdom and holy will, appeared to stand thus. The sciential reason, whose objects are purely theoretical, remains neutral, as long as its name and semblance are not usurped by the opponents of the doctrine. But it then becomes an effective ally by exposing the false show of demonstration, or by evincing the equal demonstrability of the contrary from premises equally logical. The understanding meantime suggests, the analogy of experience facilitates, the belief. Nature excites and recalls it as by a perpetual revelation. Our feelings almost necessitate it; and the law of conscience peremptorily commands it. The arguments that at all apply to it, are in its favour; and there is nothing against it, but its own sublimity. It could not be intellectually more evident without becoming morally less effective; without counteracting its own end by sacrificing the life of faith to the cold mechanism of a worthless, because compulsory, assent. The belief of a God and a future state (if a passive acquiescence may be flattered with the name of belief) does not indeed always beget a good heart, but a good heart so naturally begets the belief, that the very few exceptions must be regarded as strange anomalies from strange and unfortunate circumstances.

From these premises I proceeded to draw the following conclusions. First, that having once fully admitted the existence of an infinite yet self-conscious Creator, we are not allowed to ground the irrationality of any other article of faith on arguments which would equally prove that to be irrational, which we had allowed to be real. Secondly, that whatever is deducible from the admission of a self-comprehending and creative spirit, may be legitimately used in proof of the possibility of any further mystery concerning the divine nature. *Possibilitatum mysteriorum, (Trinitatis, &c.) contra insultus Infidelium et Hæreticorum a contradictionibus vindico; haud quidem veritatem, quæ revelatione solâ stabiliri possit;* says Leibnitz in a letter to his Duke. He then adds the following just and important remark. "In vain will tradition or texts of scripture be adduced in support of a doctrine, *donec clava impossibilitatis et contradictionis e manibus horum Herculum extorta fuerit.* For the Heretic will still reply, that texts, the literal sense of which is not so much above as directly against all reason, must be understood figuratively, as Herod is a fox, &c."

These principles I held philosophically, while in respect of revealed religion I remained a zealous Unitarian. I considered the idea of the Trinity a fair scholastic inference from the being of God as a creative intelligence; and that it was therefore entitled

to the rank of an esoteric doctrine of natural religion. But seeing in the same no practical or moral bearing, I confined it to the schools of philosophy. The admission of the *logos*, as hypostasized (i. e. neither a mere attribute or a personification) in no respect removed my doubts concerning the Incarnation and the Redemption by the cross; which I could neither reconcile in reason with the impassiveness of the Divine Being, nor in my moral feelings with the sacred distinction between things and persons, the vicarious payment of a debt and the vicarious expiation of guilt. A more thorough revolution in my philosophic principles, and a deeper insight into my own heart, were yet wanting. Nevertheless, I cannot doubt, that the difference of my metaphysical notions from those of Unitarians in general contributed to my final re-conversion to the whole truth in Christ; even as according to his own confession the books of certain Platonic philosophers (*libri quorundam Platoniorum*) commenced the rescue of St. Augustine's faith from the same error aggravated by the far darker accompaniment of the Manichæan heresy.

While my mind was thus perplexed, by a gracious providence for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, the generous and munificent patronage of Mr. Josiah and Mr. Thomas Wedgwood enabled me to finish my education in Germany. Instead of troubling others with my own crude notions and juvenile compositions, I was thenceforward better employed in attempting to store my own head with the wisdom of others. I made the best use of my time and means; and there is therefore no period of my life on which I can look back with such unmingled satisfaction. After acquiring a tolerable sufficiency in the German language\*

\* To those who design to acquire the language of a country in the country itself, it may be useful if I mention the incalculable advantage which I derived from learning all the words, that could possibly be so learnt, with the objects before me, and without the intermediation of the English terms. It was a regular part of my morning studies for the first six weeks of my residence at Ratzburg, to accompany the good and kind old pastor, with whom I lived, from the cellar to the roof, through gardens, farm-yard, &c. and to call every, the minutest, thing by its German name. Advertisements, farces, jest books, and the conversation of children while I was at play with them, contributed their share to a more home-like acquaintance with the language than I could have acquired from works of polite literature alone, or even from polite society. There is a passage of *heartly* sound sense in Luther's German letter on interpretation, to the translation of which I shall prefix, for the sake of those who read

the German, yet are not likely to have dipped often in the massive folios of this heroic reformer, the simple, sinewy, idiomatic words of the original. "Denn man muss nicht die Buchstaben in der Lateinischen Sprache fragen wie man soll Deutsch reden: sondern man muss die Mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf den Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markte, darum fragen: und denselbigen auf das Maul sehen wie sie reden, und darnach dollmetschen. So verstehen sie es denn, und merken dass man Deutsch mit ihnen redet."

#### TRANSLATION.

For one must not ask the letters in the Latin tongue, how one ought to speak German; but one must ask the mother in the house, the children in the lanes and alleys, the common man in the market, concerning this; yea, and look at the *movers* of their mouths while they are talking, and thereafter interpret. They understand you then, and mark that one talks German with them.

at Ratzeburg, which with my voyage and journey thither I have described in *The Friend*, I proceeded through Hanover to Göttingen

Here I regularly attended the lectures on physiology in the morning, and on natural history in the evening, under Blumenbach, a name as dear to every Englishman who has studied at that university, as it is venerable to men of science throughout Europe! Eichhorn's lectures on the New Testament were repeated to me from notes by a student from Ratzeburg, a young man of sound learning and indefatigable industry, who is now, I believe, a professor of the oriental languages at Heidelberg. But my chief efforts were directed towards a grounded knowledge of the German language and literature. From Professor Tychsen I received as many lessons in the Gothic of Ulphilas as sufficed to make me acquainted with its grammar, and the radical words of most frequent occurrence; and with the occasional assistance of the same philosophical linguist, I read through Ottfried's metrical paraphrase of the gospel,\* and the most important remains of the Theotiscan, or the transitional state of the Teutonic language from the Gothic to the old German of the Swabian period. Of this period (the polished dialect of which is analogous to that of our Chaucer, and which leaves the philosophic student in doubt whether the language has not since then lost more in sweetness and flexibility, than it has gained in condensation and copiousness) I read with sedulous accuracy the *Minnesinger* (or singers of love, the Provençal poets of the Swabian court) and the metrical romances; and then laboured through sufficient specimens of the master singers, their degenerate successors; not however, without occasional pleasure from the rude, yet interesting

\* This paraphrase, written about the time of Charlemagne, is by no means deficient in occasional passages of considerable poetic merit. There is a flow, and a tender enthusiasm in the following lines (at the conclusion of Chapter XI.) which even in the translation will not, I flatter myself, fail to interest the reader. Ottfried is describing the circumstances immediately following the birth of our Lord.

She gave with joy her virgin breast;  
She hid it not, she bared the breast,  
Which suckled that divinest Babe!  
Blessed, blessed were the breasts  
Which the Saviour Infant kiss'd;  
And blessed, blessed was the mother  
Who wrapp'd His limbs in swaddling clothes,  
Singing placed Him on her lap,  
Hung o'er Him with her looks of love,  
And soothed Him with a lulling motion.  
Blessed! for she shelter'd Him

From the damp and chilling air;  
Blessed, blessed! for she lay  
With such a Babe in one blest bed,  
Close as babes and mothers lie!  
Blessed, blessed evermore,  
With her virgin lips she kiss'd,  
With her arms, and to her breast  
She embraced the Babe divine,  
Her Babe divine the Virgin Mother!  
There lives not on this ring of earth  
A mortal that can sing her praise,  
Mighty mother, Virgin pure,  
In the darkness and the night  
For us she bore the heavenly Lord!

Most interesting is it to consider the effect when the feelings are wrought above the natural pitch by the belief of something mysterious, while all the images are purely natural. Then it is, that religion and poetry strike deepest.

grains of Hans Sachs, the cobbler of Nuremberg. Of this man's genius five folio volumes with double columns are extant in print, and nearly an equal number in manuscript; yet the indefatigable bard takes care to inform his readers that he never made a shoe the less, but had virtuously reared a large family by the labour of his hands.

In Pindar, Chaucer, Dante, Milton, &c. &c., we have instances of the close connection of poetic genius with the love of liberty and of genuine reformation. The moral sense at least will not be outraged, if I add to the list the name of this honest shoemaker (a trade, by the bye, remarkable for the production of philosophers and poets). His poem entitled the Morning Star, was the very first publication that appeared in praise and support of Luther; and an excellent hymn of Hans Sachs, which has been deservedly translated into almost all the European languages, was commonly sung in the Protestant churches whenever the heroic reformer visited them.

In Luther's own German writings, and eminently in his translation of the Bible, the German language commenced. I mean the language as it is at present *written*; that which is called the High German, as contra-distinguished from the Platt-Deutsch, the dialect of the flat or northern countries, and from the Ober-Deutsch, the language of the Middle and Southern Germany. The High German is indeed a *lingua communis*, not actually the native language of any province, but the choice and fragrancy of all the dialects. From this cause it is at once the most copious and the most grammatical of all the European tongues.

Within less than a century after Luther's death the German was inundated with pedantic barbarisms. A few volumes of this period I read through from motives of curiosity; for it is not easy to imagine any thing more fantastic than the very appearance of their pages. Almost every third word is a Latin word with a Germanized ending, the Latin portion being always printed in Roman letters, while in the last syllable the German character is retained.

At length, about the year 1620, Opitz arose, whose genius more nearly resembled that of Dryden than any other poet who at present occurs to my recollection. In the opinion of Lessing, the most acute of critics, and of Adelung, the first of Lexicographers, Opitz, and the Silesian poets, his followers, not only restored the language, but still remain the models of pure diction. A stranger has no vote on such a question; but after repeated perusal of the work my feelings justified the verdict, and I seemed to have ac-



quired from them a sort of tact for what is genuine in the style of later writers.

Of the splendid era, which commenced with Gellert, Klopstock, Ramler, Lessing, and their compeers, I need not speak. With the opportunities which I enjoyed, it would have been disgraceful not to have been familiar with their writings; and I have already said as much as the present biographical sketch requires concerning the German philosophers, whose works, for the greater part, I became acquainted with at a far later period.

Soon after my return from Germany I was solicited to undertake the literary and political department in the *Morning Post*; and I acceded to the proposal on the condition that the paper should thenceforwards be conducted on certain fixed and announced principles, and that I should be neither obliged or requested to deviate from them in favour of any party or any event. In consequence, that Journal became and for many years continued anti-ministerial indeed, yet with a very qualified approbation of the opposition, and, with far greater earnestness and zeal both anti-jacobin and anti-gallican. To this hour I cannot find reason to approve of the first war either in its commencement or its conduct. Nor can I understand with what reason either Mr. Perceval (whom I am singular enough to regard as the best and wisest minister of this reign), or the present administration, can be said to have pursued the plans of Mr. Pitt. The love of their country, and perseverant hostility to French principles and French ambition are indeed honourable qualities common to them and to their predecessor. But it appears to me as clear as the evidence of facts can render any question of history, that the successes of the Perceval and of the existing ministry have been owing to their having pursued measures the direct contrary to Mr. Pitt's. Such for instance are the concentration of the national force to one object; the abandonment of the subsidizing policy, so far at least as neither to goad or bribe the continental courts into war, till the convictions of their subjects had rendered it a war of their own seeking; and above all, in their manly and generous reliance on the good sense of the English people, and on that loyalty which is linked to the very heart of the nation by the system of credit and the interdependence of property.\*

\* Lord Grenville has lately re-asserted (in the House of Lords) the imminent danger of a revolution in the earlier part of the war against France. I doubt not, that his Lordship is sincere; and it must be flattering to his feelings to believe it. But where are the evidences of the danger, to which a future

historian can appeal? Or must he rest on an assertion? Let me be permitted to extract a passage on the subject from "The Friend." "I have said that to withstand the arguments of the lawless, the Anti-jacobins proposed to suspend the law, and by the interposition of a particular statute to eclipse the blessed

Be this as it may, I am persuaded that the *Morning Post* proved a far more useful ally to the Government in its most important objects, in consequence of its being generally considered as moderately anti-ministerial, than if it had been the avowed eulogist of Mr. Pitt. (The few, whose curiosity or fancy should lead them to turn over the journals of that date, may find a small proof of this in the frequent charges made by the *Morning Chronicle*, that such and such essays or leading paragraphs had been sent from the Treasury.) The rapid and unusual increase in the sale of the *Morning Post* is a sufficient pledge that genuine impartiality, with a respectable portion of literary talent, will secure the success of a newspaper without the aid of party or ministerial patronage. But by impartiality I mean an honest and enlightened adherence to a code of intelligible principles previously announced, and faithfully referred to in support of every judgment on men and events; not indiscriminate abuse, not the indul-

light of the universal sun, that spies and informers might tyrannize and escape in the ominous darkness. Oh! if these mistaken men, intoxicated and bewildered with the panic of property which they themselves were the chief agents in exciting, had ever lived in a country where there really existed a general disposition to change and rebellion! Had they ever travelled through Sicily; or through France at the first coming on of the revolution; or even alas! through too many of the provinces of a sister island; they could not but have shrunk from their own declarations concerning the state of feeling, and opinion at that time predominant throughout Great Britain. There was a time (heaven grant! that that time may have passed by) when by crossing a narrow strait, they might have learnt the true symptoms of approaching danger, and have secured themselves from mistaking the meetings and idle rant of such sedition as shrunk appalled from the sight of a constable, for the dire murmuring and strange consternation which precedes the storm or earthquake of national discord. Not only in coffee-houses and public theatres, but even at the tables of the wealthy, they would have heard the advocates of existing Government defend their cause in the language and with the tone of men who are conscious that they are in a minority. But in England, when the alarm was at its highest, there was not a city, no not a town or village, in which a man suspected of holding democratic principles could move abroad without receiving some unpleasant proof of the hatred in which his supposed opinions were held by the great majority of the people; and the only instances of popular excess and indignation were in favour of the Government and the Established Church. But why need I appeal to

these invidious facts? Turn over the pages of history and seek for a single instance of a revolution having been effected without the concurrence of either the nobles, or the ecclesiastics, or the monied classes, in any country in which the influences of property had ever been predominant, and where the interests of the proprietors were interlinked! Examine the revolution of the Belgic provinces under Philip 2nd; the civil wars of France in the preceding generation; the history of the American revolution, or the yet more recent events in Sweden and in Spain; and it will be scarcely possible not to perceive, that in England, from 1791 to the peace of Amiens, there were neither tendencies to confederacy nor actual confederacies, against which the existing laws had not provided sufficient safeguards and an ample punishment. But alas! the panic of property had been struck in the first instance for party purposes; and when it became general, its propagators caught it themselves and ended in believing their own lie; even as our bulls in Borrowdale sometimes run mad with the echo of their own bellowing. The consequences were most injurious. Our attention was concentrated on a monster, which could not survive the convulsions in which it had been brought forth: even the enlightened Burke himself too often talking and reasoning as if a perpetual and organized anarchy had been a possible thing! Thus while we were warring against French doctrines, we took little heed whether the means by which we attempted to overthrow them were not likely to aid and augment the far more formidable evil of French ambition. Like children we ran away from the yelping of a cur, and took shelter at the heels of a vicious war-horse."

gence of an editor's own malignant passions, and still less, if that be possible, a determination to make money by flattering the envy and cupidity, the vindictive restlessness and self-conceit of the half-witted vulgar; a determination almost fiendish, but which, I have been informed, has been boastfully avowed by one man, the most notorious of those mob-sycophants! From the commencement of the Addington administration to the present day, whatever I have written in the *Morning Post*, or (after that paper was transferred to other proprietors) in the *Courier*, has been in defence or furtherance of the measures of Government.

" Things of this nature scarce survive the night  
That gives them birth; they perish in the sight,  
Cast by so far from after-life, that there  
Can scarcely aught be said, but that they were !"

CARTWRIGHT'S *Prologue to the Royal Slave*.

Yet in these labours I employed, and in the belief of partial friends wasted, the prime and manhood of my intellect. Most assuredly they added nothing to my fortune or my reputation. The industry of the week supplied the necessities of the week. From Government or the friends of Government I not only never received remuneration, or ever expected it; but I was never honoured with a single acknowledgment or expression of satisfaction. Yet the retrospect is far from painful or matter of regret. I am not indeed silly enough to take as any thing more than a violent hyperbole of party debate, Mr. Fox's assertion that the *late* war (I trust that the epithet is not prematurely applied) was a war produced by the *Morning Post*; or I should be proud to have the words inscribed on my tomb. As little do I regard the circumstance, that I was a specified object of Buonaparte's resentment during my residence in Italy in consequence of those essays in the *Morning Post* during the peace of Amiens. (Of this I was warned, directly, by Baron Von Humboldt, the Prussian Plenipotentiary, who at that time was the minister of the Prussian court at Rome; and indirectly, through his secretary, by Cardinal Fesch himself.) Nor do I lay any greater weight on the confirming fact, that an order for my arrest was sent from Paris, from which danger I was rescued by the kindness of a noble Benedictine, and the gracious connivance of that good old man, the present Pope. For the late tyrant's vindictive appetite was omnivorous, and preyed equally on a Duc d'Enghien,\* and

\* I seldom think of the murder of this illustrious Prince without recollecting the lines of Valerius Flaccus.

Instat fama viri, virtusque haud læta Tyranno;  
Ergo antefire metus, juvenemque exstinguere pergit."

" Super ipsius ingens

ARGOV'AVT, Lib. I. 30.

the writer of a newspaper paragraph. Like a true vulture,\* Napoleon with an eye not less telescopic, and with a taste equally coarse in his ravin, could descend from the most dazzling heights to pounce on the leveret in the brake, or even on the field-mouse amid the grass. But I do derive a gratification from the knowledge, that my essays contributed to introduce the practice of placing the questions and events of the day in a moral point of view; in giving a dignity to particular measures by tracing their policy or impolicy to permanent principles, and an interest to principles by the application of them to individual measures. In Mr. Burke's writings indeed the germs of almost all political truths may be found. But I dare assume to myself the merit of having first explicitly defined and analyzed the nature of Jacobinism; and that in distinguishing the Jacobin from the republican, the democrat and the mere demagogue, I both rescued the word from remaining a mere term of abuse, and put on their guard many honest minds, who even, in their heat of zeal against Jacobinism, admitted or supported principles from which the worst parts of that system may be legitimately deduced. That these are not necessary practical results of such principles, we owe to that fortunate inconsequence of our nature which permits the heart to rectify the errors of the understanding. The detailed examination of the consular Government and its pretended constitution, and the proof given by me that it was a consummate despotism in masquerade, extorted a recantation even from the *Morning Chronicle*, which had previously extolled this constitution as the perfection of a wise and regulated liberty. On every great occurrence I endeavoured to discover in past history the event that most nearly resembled it. I procured, wherever it was possible, the contemporary historians, memorialists, and pamphleteers. Then fairly subtracting the points of difference from those of likeness, as the balance favoured the former or the latter, I conjectured that the result would be the same or different. In the series of essays,† entitled "A comparison of France under Napoleon with Rome under the first Cæsars," and in those which followed "On the probable final

\* Ἐνῆα δὲ καὶ τὸν χῆνα καὶ τὴν Δορκάδα,  
Καὶ τὸν Λαγῶν, καὶ τὸ τῶν Ταύρων γένος.  
PHILE de animal. propriet.

† A small selection from the numerous articles furnished by me to the *Morning Post* and *Courier*, chiefly as they regard the sources and effects of Jacobinism and the connection of certain systems of political economy with Jacobinical despotism, will form part of "The

Friend," which I am now completing, and which will be shortly published, for I can scarcely say republished, with the numbers arranged in Chapters according to their subjects.

"Accipe principium rursus, corpusque coactum  
Desere; mutata melior procede figura."

restoration of the Bourbons," I feel myself authorized to affirm, by the effect produced on many intelligent men, that were the dates wanting, it might have been suspected that the essays had been written within the last twelve months. The same plan I pursued at the commencement of the Spanish revolution, and with the same success, taking the war of the United Provinces with Philip II, as the ground work of the comparison. I have mentioned this from no motives of vanity, nor even from motives of self-defence, which would justify a certain degree of egotism, especially if it be considered how often and grossly I have been attacked for sentiments which I had exerted my best powers to confute and expose, and how grievously these charges acted to my disadvantage while I was in Malta. Or rather they would have done so, if my own feelings had not precluded the wish of a settled establishment in that island. But I have mentioned it from the full persuasion that, armed with the two-fold knowledge of history and the human mind, a man will scarcely err in his judgment concerning the sum total of any future national event, if he have been able to procure the original documents of the past together with authentic accounts of the present, and if he have a philosophic tact for what is truly important in facts, and in most instances therefore for such facts as the dignity of history has excluded from the volumes of our modern compilers, by the courtesy of the age entitled historians.

To have lived in vain must be a painful thought to any man, and especially so to him who has made literature his profession. I should therefore rather condole than be angry with the mind, which could attribute to no worthier feelings than those of vanity or self-love the satisfaction which I acknowledge to have enjoyed from the republication of my political essays (either whole or as extracts) not only in many of our own provincial papers, but in the federal journals throughout America. I regarded it as some proof of my not having laboured altogether in vain, that from the articles written by me shortly before and at the commencement of the late unhappy war with America, not only the sentiments were adopted, but in some instance the very language, in several of the Massachusetts state papers.

But no one of these motives, nor all conjointly, would have impelled me to a statement so uncomfortable to my own feelings, had not my character been repeatedly attacked by an unjustifiable intrusion on private life, as of a man incorrigibly idle, and who, intrusted not only with ample talents, but favoured with unusual opportunities of improving them, had nevertheless suffered them

to rust away without any efficient exertion either for his own good or that of his fellow-creatures. Even if the compositions which I have made public, and that too in a form the most certain of an extensive circulation, though the least flattering to an author's self-love, had been published in books, they would have filled a respectable number of volumes, though every passage of merely temporary interest were omitted. My prose writings have been charged with a disproportionate demand on the attention; with an excess of refinement in the mode of arriving at truths; with beating the ground for that which might have been run down by the eye; with the length and laborious construction of my periods; in short with obscurity and the love of paradox. But my severest critics have not pretended to have found in my compositions triviality, or traces of a mind that shrunk from the toil of thinking. No one has charged me with tricking out in other words the thoughts of others, or with hashing up anew the *crambe jam decies coctam* of English literature or philosophy. Seldom have I written that in a day, the acquisition or investigation of which had not cost me the previous labour of a month.

But are books the only channel through which the stream of intellectual usefulness can flow? Is the diffusion of truth to be estimated by publications; or publications by the truth which they diffuse or at least contain? I speak it in the excusable warmth of a mind stung by an accusation which has not only been advanced in reviews of the widest circulation, not only registered in the bulkiest works of periodical literature, but by frequency of repetition has become an admitted fact in private literary circles, and thoughtlessly repeated by too many who call themselves my friends, and whose own recollections ought to have suggested a contrary testimony. Would that the criterion of a scholar's utility were the number and moral value of the truths which he has been the means of throwing into the general circulation; or the number and value of the minds whom, by his conversation or letters, he has excited into activity, and supplied with the germs of their after-growth! A distinguished rank might not indeed, even then, be awarded to my exertions, but I should dare look forward with confidence to an honourable acquittal. I should dare appeal to the numerous and respectable audiences, which at different times and in different places honoured my lecture-rooms with their attendance, whether the points of view from which the subjects treated of were surveyed, whether the grounds of my reasoning were such as they had heard or read elsewhere, or have since found in previous publications. I can

conscientiously declare, that the complete success of the Remorse on the first night of its representation did not give me as great or as heart-felt a pleasure, as the observation that the pit and boxes were crowded with faces familiar to me, though of individuals whose names I did not know, and of whom I knew nothing but that they had attended one or other of my courses of lectures. It is an excellent, though perhaps somewhat vulgar proverb, that there are cases where a man may be as well "in for a pound as for a penny." To those who from ignorance of the serious injury I have received from this rumour of having dreamt away my life to no purpose, injuries which I unwillingly remember at all, much less am disposed to record in a sketch of my literary life: or to those, who from their own feelings, or the gratification they derive from thinking contemptuously of others, would like Job's comforters attribute these complaints, extorted from me by the sense of wrong, to self-conceit or presumptuous vanity, I have already furnished such ample materials, that I shall gain nothing by withholding the remainder. I will not therefore hesitate to ask the consciences of those who from their long acquaintance with me and with the circumstances are best qualified to decide or be my judges, whether the restitution of the *suum cuique* would increase or detract from my literary reputation. In this exculpation I hope to be understood as speaking of myself comparatively, and in proportion to the claims which others are entitled to make on my time or my talents. By what I have effected am I to be judged by my fellow men; what I could have done is a question for my own conscience. On my own account I may perhaps have had sufficient reason to lament my deficiency in self-control, and the neglect of centering my powers to the realization of some permanent work. But to verse rather than to prose, if to either, belongs the voice of mourning for

Keen pangs of love awakening as a babe  
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart,  
And fears self-will'd that shunn'd the eye of hope,  
And hope that scarce would know itself from fear;  
Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,  
And genius given and knowledge won in vain,  
And all which I had cull'd in wood-walks wild  
And all which patient toil had rear'd, and all  
Commune with thee had open'd out—but flowers  
Strew'd on my corpse, and borne upon my bier  
In the same coffin, for the self-same grave!

S. T. C. (To William Wordsworth.)

These will exist, for the future, I trust only in the poetic

strains, which the feelings at the time called forth. In those only, gentle reader,

*"Affectus animi varios, bellumque sequacis  
Perlegis invidia; cuiusque revolvitis inanes;  
Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo.  
Perlegis et lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acutâ  
Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus.  
Omnia paulatim consumit longior ætas  
Vivendoque simul morimur, rapimurque manendo.  
Ipse mihi collatus enim non ille videbor;  
Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,  
Vox aliudque sonat. Jamque observatio vitæ  
Multa dedit:—lugere nihil, ferre omnia; jamque  
Paulatim lacrymas rerum experientia tersit."*

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## CHAPTER XI.

An affectionate exhortation to those who in early life feel themselves disposed to become authors.

+ IT was a favourite remark of the late Mr. Whitbread's, that no man does anything from a single motive. The separate motives, or rather moods of mind, which produced the preceding reflections and anecdotes have been laid open to the reader in each separate instance. But an interest in the welfare of those who at the present time may be in circumstances not dissimilar to my own at my first entrance into life, has been the constant accompaniment, and (as it were) the under-song of all my feelings. Whitehead, exerting the prerogative of his laureateship, addressed to youthful poets a poetic charge, which is perhaps the best, and certainly the most interesting of his works. With no other privilege than that of sympathy and sincere good wishes, I would address an affectionate exhortation to the youthful literati, grounded on my own experience. It will be but short; for the beginning, middle, and end converge to one charge: *never pursue literature as a trade.* With the exception of one extraordinary man, I have never known an individual, least of all an individual of genius, healthy or happy without a profession, i. e. some regular employment, which does not depend on the will of the moment, and which can be carried on so far mechanically that an average quantum only of health, spirits, and intellectual exertion are requisite to its faithful discharge. Three hours of leisure, unannoyed by any alien anxiety, and looked forward to with delight as a change and recreation, will suffice to realize in literature



a larger product of what is truly genial, than weeks of compulsion. Money, and immediate reputation form only an arbitrary and accidental end of literary labour. The hope of increasing them by any given exertion will often prove a stimulant to industry; but the necessity of acquiring them will in all works of genius convert the stimulant into a narcotic. Motives by excess reverse their very nature, and instead of exciting, stun and stupify the mind. For it is one contradistinction of genius from talent, that its predominant end is always comprised in the means; and this is one of the many points which establish an analogy between genius and virtue. Now though talents may exist without genius, yet as genius cannot exist, certainly not manifest itself, without talents, I would advise every scholar who feels the genial power working within him, so far to make a division between the two, as that he should devote his talents to the acquirement of competence in some known trade or profession, and his genius to objects of his tranquil and unbiassed choice; while the consciousness of being actuated in both alike by the sincere desire to perform his duty, will alike ennoble both. "My dear young friend" (I would say) "suppose yourself established in any honourable occupation. From the manufactory or counting-house, from the law court, or from having visited your last patient, you return at evening,

"Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of home  
Is sweetest ———"

to your family, prepared for its social enjoyments, with the very countenances of your wife and children brightened, and their voice of welcome made doubly welcome, by the knowledge that, as far as they are concerned, you have satisfied the demands of the day by the labour of the day. Then, when you retire into your study, in the books on your shelves you revisit so many venerable friends with whom you can converse. Your own spirit scarcely less free from personal anxieties than the great minds that in those books are still living for you! Even your writing desk with its blank paper and all its other implements will appear as a chain of flowers, capable of linking your feelings as well as thoughts to events and characters past or to come; not a chain of iron which binds you down to think of the future and the remote by recalling the claims and feelings of the peremptory present. But why should I say retire? The habits of active life and daily intercourse with the stir of the world will tend to give you such self-command, that the presence of your family will be no interruption. Nay, the social silence, or undisturbing voices of a wife or

sister will be like a restorative atmosphere, or soft music which moulds a dream without becoming its object. If facts are required to prove the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment, the works of Cicero and Xenophon among the ancients; of Sir Thomas More, Bacon, Baxter, or to refer at once to later and contemporary instances, Darwin and Roscoe, are at once decisive of the question.

But all men may not dare promise themselves a sufficiency of self-control for the imitation of those examples; though strict scrutiny should always be made, whether indolence, restlessness, or a vanity impatient for immediate gratification, have not tampered with the judgment and assumed the vizard of humility for the purposes of self-delusion. Still the church presents to every man of learning and genius a profession, in which he may cherish a rational hope of being able to unite the widest schemes of literary utility with the strictest performance of professional duties. Among the numerous blessings of Christianity, the introduction of an established church makes an especial claim on the gratitude of scholars and philosophers; in England at least, where the principles of Protestantism have conspired with the freedom of the government to double all its salutary powers by the removal of its abuses.

That not only the maxims, but the grounds of a pure morality, the mere fragments of which

—— “the lofty grave tragedians taught  
In chorus or iambic, teachers best  
Of moral prudence, with delight received  
In brief sententious precepts;”  
PARADISE REGAINED.

and that the sublime truths of the divine unity and attributes, which a Plato found most hard to learn, and deemed it still more difficult to reveal; that these should have become the almost hereditary property of childhood and poverty, of the hovel and the workshop; that even to the unlettered they sound as commonplace, is a phenomenon which must withhold all but minds of the most vulgar cast from undervaluing the services even of the pulpit and the reading-desk. Yet those who confine the efficiency of an established church to its public offices can hardly be placed in a much higher rank of intellect. That to every parish throughout the kingdom there is transplanted a germ of civilization; that in the remotest villages there is a nucleus, round which the capabilities of the place may crystallize and brighten; a model sufficiently superior to excite, yet sufficiently near to encourage and facilitate

imitation; this, the unobtrusive, continuous agency of a Protestant church establishment, this it is which the patriot and the philanthropist, who would fain unite the love of peace with the faith in the progressive amelioration of mankind, cannot estimate at too high a price. "It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies."\* The clergyman is with his parishioners and among them; he is neither in the cloistered cell, or in the wilderness, but a neighbour and a family man, whose education and rank admit him to the mansion of the rich landholder, while his duties make him the frequent visitor of the farm-house and the cottage. He is, or he may become, connected with the families of his parish or its vicinity by marriage. And among the instances of the blindness, or at best, the short-sightedness which it is the nature of cupidity to inflict, I know few more striking than the clamours of the farmers against church property. Whatever was not paid to the clergyman would inevitably at the next lease be paid to the landholder; while, as the case at present stands, the revenues of the church are in some sort the reversionary property of every family that may have a member educated for the church, or a daughter that may marry a clergyman. Instead of being foreclosed and immovable, it is in fact the only species of landed property that is essentially moving and circulative. That there exist no inconveniences, who will pretend to assert? But I have yet to expect the proof, that the inconveniences are greater in this than in any other species: or that either the farmers or the clergy would be benefited by forcing the latter to become either *Trullibers*, or salaried placemen. Nay, I do not hesitate to declare my firm persuasion, that whatever reason of discontent the farmers may assign, the true cause is this: that they may cheat the parson, but cannot cheat the steward; and that they are disappointed if they should have been able to withhold only two pounds less than the legal claim, having expected to withhold five. At all events, considered relatively to the encouragement of learning and genius, the establishment presents a patronage at once so effective and unburthensome, that it would be impossible to afford the like or equal in any but a Christian and Protestant country. There is scarce a department of human knowledge without some bearing on the various critical, historical, philosophical, and moral truths, in which the scholar must be interested as a clergyman; no one pursuit worthy of a man of genius, which may not be followed without incongruity. To give the

\* Job xxviii. 16, 18.

history of the Bible as a book, would be little less than to relate the origin or first excitement of all the literature and science that we now possess. The very decorum which the profession imposes is favourable to the best purposes of genius, and tends to counteract its most frequent defects. Finally, that man must be deficient in sensibility, who would not find an incentive to emulation in the great and burning lights which, in a long series, have illustrated the Church of England; who would not hear from within an echo to the voice from their sacred shrines:

“*Et pater Aeneas et avunculus excitat Hector.*”

But whatever be the profession or trade chosen, the advantages are many and important compared with the state of a mere literary man, who in any degree depends on the sale of his works for the necessities and comforts of life. In the former a man lives in sympathy with the world in which he lives. At least he acquires a better and quicker tact for the knowledge of that with which men in general can sympathize. He learns to manage his genius more prudently and efficaciously. His powers and acquirements gain him likewise more real admiration; for they surpass the legitimate expectations of others. He is something besides an author, and is not therefore considered merely as an author. The hearts of men are open to him, as to one of their own class; and whether he exerts himself or not in the conversational circles of his acquaintance, his silence is not attributed to pride, nor his communicativeness to vanity. To these advantages I will venture to add a superior chance of happiness in domestic life, were it only that it is as natural for the man to be out of the circle of his household during the day, as it is meritorious for the woman to remain for the most part within it. But this subject involves points of consideration so numerous and so delicate, and would not only permit, but require such ample documents from the biography of literary men, that I now merely allude to it *in transitu*. When the same circumstance has occurred at very different times to very different persons, all of whom have some one thing in common, there is reason to suppose that such circumstance is not merely attributable to the persons concerned, but is in some measure occasioned by the one point in common to them all. Instead of the vehement and almost slanderous dehortation from marriage, which the *Misogyne*, Boccaccio,\* addresses to literary men, I would substitute the simple advice: be not *merely* a man of letters! Let literature be an honourable *augmentation* to your arms, but not constitute the coat, or fill the escutcheon!

\* *Vita e Costumi di Dante*, p. 12, 16.

To objections from conscience I can of course answer in no other way, than by requesting the youthful objector (as I have already done on a former occasion) to ascertain with strict self-examination, whether other influences may not be at work; whether spirits, "not of health," and with whispers "not from heaven," may not be walking in the twilight of his consciousness. Let him catalogue his scruples, and reduce them to a distinct intelligible form; let him be certain that he has read with a docile mind and favourable dispositions the best and most fundamental works on the subject; that he has had both mind and heart opened to the great and illustrious qualities of the many renowned characters who had doubted like himself, and whose researches had ended in the clear conviction that their doubts had been groundless, or at least in no proportion to the counter-weight. Happy will it be for such a man, if among his contemporaries, elder than himself, he should meet with one who, with similar powers and feelings as acute as his own, had entertained the same scruples; had acted upon them; and who, by after-research (when the step was, alas! irretrievable, but for that very reason, his research undeniably disinterested) had discovered himself to have quarrelled with received opinions only to embrace errors; to have left the direction tracked out for him on the high road of honourable exertion, only to deviate into a labyrinth where, when he had wandered till his head was giddy, his best good fortune was finally to have found his way out again, too late for prudence, though not too late for conscience or for truth! Time spent in such delay is time won; for manhood in the meantime is advancing, and with it increase of knowledge, strength of judgment, and above all, temperance of feelings. And even if these should effect no change, yet the delay will at least prevent the final approval of the decision from being alloyed by the inward censure of the rashness and vanity by which it had been precipitated. It would be a sort of irreligion, and scarcely less than a libel on human nature, to believe that there is any established and reputable profession or employment in which a man may not continue to act with honesty and honour; and doubtless there is likewise none which may not at times present temptations to the contrary. But woefully will that man find himself mistaken who imagines that the profession of literature, or, to speak more plainly, the trade of authorship, besets its members with fewer or with less insidious temptations than the Church, the law, or the different branches of commerce. But I have treated sufficiently on this unpleasant subject in an early chapter of this volume. I will conclude the present therefore with a short extract from

Herder, whose name I might have added to the illustrious list of those who have combined the successful pursuit of the Muses not only with the faithful discharge, but with the highest honours and honourable emoluments of an established profession. The translation the reader will find in a note below: \* "*Am sorgfältigsten, meiden sie die Autorschaft. Zu früh oder unmässig gebraucht, macht sie den Kopf wüste und das Herz leer; wenn sie auch sonst keine üble Folgen gäbe. Ein Mensch, der nur liest um zu drücken, liest wahrscheinlich übel; und wer jeden Gedanken, der ihm aufstosst, durch Feder und Presse versendet, hat sie in kurzer Zeit alle versandt, und wird bald ein blosser Diener der Druckerey, ein Buchstabensetzer werden.*"



## CHAPTER XII.

A Chapter of requests and premonitions concerning the perusal or omission of the Chapter that follows.

IN the perusal of philosophical works I have been greatly benefited by a resolve which, in the antithetic form and with the allowed quaintness of an adage or maxim, I have been accustomed to word thus: "Until you understand a writer's ignorance, presume yourself ignorant of his understanding." This golden rule of mine does, I own, resemble those of Pythagoras in its obscurity rather than in its depth. If, however, the reader will permit me to be my own Hierocles, I trust that he will find its meaning fully explained by the following instances. I have now before me a treatise of a religious fanatic, full of dreams and supernatural experiences. I see clearly the writer's grounds, and their hollowness. I have a complete insight into the causes which, through the medium of his body, had acted on his mind; and by application of received and ascertained laws, I can satisfactorily explain to my own reason all the strange incidents which the writer records of himself. And this I can do without suspecting him of any intentional falsehood. As when in broad daylight a man tracks the

### \* TRANSLATION.

"With the greatest possible solicitude avoid authorship. Too early or immoderately employed, it makes the head waste and the heart empty; even were there no other worse consequences. A person who reads only to print, in all probability reads amiss; and he, who sends away through the pen and the press every thought, the moment it occurs to him, will in a short time have

sent all away, and will become a mere journeyman of the printing-office, a compositor."

To which I may add from myself, that what medical physiologists affirm of certain secretions, applies equally to our thoughts: they too must be taken up again into the circulation, and be again and again re-secreted in order to ensure a healthful vigour, both to the mind and to its intellectual offspring.

steps of a traveller who had lost his way in a fog, or by treacherous moonshine; even so, and with the same tranquil sense of certainty, can I follow the traces of this bewildered visionary. I understand his ignorance.

On the other hand, I have been re-perusing with the best energies of my mind the *Timæus* of Plato. Whatever I comprehend impresses me with a reverential sense of the author's genius; but there is a considerable portion of the work to which I can attach no consistent meeting. In other treatises of the same philosopher, intended for the average comprehensions of men, I have been delighted with the masterly good sense, with the perspicuity of the language, and the aptness of the inductions. I recollect, likewise, that numerous passages in this author, which I thoroughly comprehend, were formerly no less unintelligible to me than the passages now in question. It would, I am aware, be quite fashionable to dismiss them at once as Platonic jargon. But this I cannot do with satisfaction to my own mind, because I have sought in vain for causes adequate to the solution of the assumed inconsistency. I have no insight into the possibility of a man so eminently wise, using words with such half-meanings to himself as must, perforce, pass into no meaning to his readers. When, in addition to the motives thus suggested by my own reason, I bring into distinct remembrance the number and the series of great men who, after long and zealous study of these works, had joined in honouring the name of Plato with epithets that almost transcend humanity, I feel that a contemptuous verdict on my part might argue want of modesty, but would hardly be received by the judicious as evidence of superior penetration. Therefore, utterly baffled in all my attempts to understand the ignorance of Plato, I conclude myself ignorant of his understanding.

In lieu of the various requests which the anxiety of authorship addresses to the unknown reader, I advance but this one: that he will either pass over the following chapter altogether, or read the whole connectedly. The fairest part of the most beautiful body will appear deformed and monstrous, if dissevered from its place in the organic whole. Nay, on delicate subjects, where a seemingly trifling difference of more or less may constitute a difference in kind, even a faithful display of the main and supporting ideas, if yet they are separated from the forms by which they are at once clothed and modified, may perchance present a skeleton indeed, but a skeleton to alarm and deter. Though I might find numerous precedents, I shall not desire the reader to strip his mind of all prejudices, nor to keep all prior systems out of view during his ex-

amination of the present. For, in truth, such requests appear to me not much unlike the advice given to hypochondriacal patients in Dr. Buchan's domestic medicine; videlicet, to preserve themselves uniformly tranquil and in good spirits. Till I had discovered the art of destroying the memory *a parte post*, without injury to its future operations, and without detriment to the judgment, I should suppress the request as premature; and, therefore, however much I may wish to be read with an unprejudiced mind, I do not presume to state it as a necessary condition.

The extent of my daring is to suggest one criterion by which it may be rationally conjectured beforehand whether or no a reader would lose his time, and perhaps his temper, in the perusal of this or any other treatise constructed on similar principles. But it would be cruelly misinterpreted, as implying the least disrespect either for the moral or intellectual qualities of the individuals thereby precluded. The criterion is this: if a man receives as fundamental facts, and therefore of course indemonstrable and incapable of further analysis, the general notions of matter, spirit, soul, body, action, passiveness, time, space, cause and effect, consciousness, perception, memory and habit; if he feels his mind completely at rest concerning all these, and is satisfied, if only he can analyze all other notions into some one or more of these supposed elements with plausible subordination and apt arrangement; to such a mind I would as courteously as possible convey the hint that for him the chapter was not written.

*Vir bonus es, doctus, prudens ! aut haud tibi spiro.*

For these terms do in truth include all the difficulties which the human mind can propose for solution. Taking them therefore in mass and unexamined, it requires only a decent apprenticeship in logic to draw forth their contents in all forms and colours, as the professors of legerdemain at our village fairs pull out ribbon after ribbon from their mouths. And not more difficult is it to reduce them back again to their different genera. But though this analysis is highly useful in rendering our knowledge more distinct, it does not really add to it. It does not increase, though it gives us a greater mastery over, the wealth which we before possessed. For forensic purposes, for all the established professions of society, this is sufficient. But for philosophy in its highest sense, as the science of ultimate truths, and therefore *scientia scientiarum*, this mere analysis of terms is preparative only, though, as a preparative discipline, indispensable.



Still less dare a favourable perusal be anticipated from the proselytes of that compendious philosophy, which, talking of mind but thinking of brick and mortar, or other images equally abstracted from body, contrives a theory of spirit by nicknaming matter, and in a few hours can qualify its dullest disciples to explain the *omne scibile* by reducing all things to impressions, ideas, and sensations.

But it is time to tell the truth, though it requires some courage to avow it in an age and country in which disquisitions on all subjects not privileged to adopt technical terms or scientific symbols must be addressed to the public. I say, then, that it is neither possible or necessary for all men, or for many, to be philosophers. There is a philosophic (and inasmuch as it is actualized by an effort of freedom, an artificial) consciousness, which lies beneath or (as it were) behind the spontaneous consciousness natural to all reflecting beings. As the elder Romans distinguished their northern provinces into Cis-Alpine and Trans-Alpine, so may we divide all the objects of human knowledge into those on this side, and those on the other side of the spontaneous consciousness; *citra et trans conscientiam communem*. The latter is exclusively the domain of pure philosophy, which is therefore properly entitled transcendental, in order to discriminate it at once both from mere reflection and re-presentation on the one hand, and on the other from those flights of lawless speculation which, abandoned by all distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties, are justly condemned as transcendent.\* The first range of hills that encircles the scanty

\* This distinction between transcendental and transcendent is observed by our elder divines and philosophers, whenever they express themselves scholastically. Dr. Johnson indeed has confounded the two words; but his own authorities do not bear him out. Of this celebrated dictionary I will venture to remark once for all, that I should suspect the man of a morose disposition who should speak of it without respect and gratitude as a most instructive and entertaining book, and hitherto, unfortunately, an indispensable book; but I confess, that I should be surprised at hearing from a philosophic and thorough scholar any but very qualified praises of it, as a dictionary. I am not now alluding to the number of genuine words omitted; for this is (and perhaps to a greater extent) true, as Mr. Wakefield has noticed, of our best Greek Lexicons, and this too after the successive labours of so many giants in learning. I refer at present both to omissions and commissions of a more important nature. What these are, *me saltem judice*, will be

stated at full in *The Friend*, re-published and completed.

I had never heard of the correspondence between Wakefield and Fox till I saw the account of it this morning (16th September 1815) in the *Monthly Review*. I was not a little gratified at finding, that Mr. Wakefield had proposed to himself nearly the same plan for a Greek and English Dictionary, which I had formed, and began to execute, now ten years ago. But far, far more grieved am I, that he did not live to complete it. I cannot but think it a subject of most serious regret, that the same heavy expenditure which is now employing in the republication of Stephanus augmented, had not been applied to a new Lexicon on a more philosophical plan, with the English, German, and French Synonymes as well as the Latin. In almost every instance the precise individual meaning might be given in an English or German word; whereas in Latin we must too often be contented with a mere general and inclusive term. How indeed can it be otherwise, when

vale of human life is the horizon for the majority of its inhabitants. On its ridges the common sun is born and departs. From them the stars rise, and touching them they vanish. By the many even this range, the natural limit and bulwark of the vale, is but imperfectly known. Its higher ascents are too often hidden by mists and clouds from uncultivated swamps, which few have courage or curiosity to penetrate. To the multitude below these vapours appear, now as the dark haunts of terrific agents, on which none may intrude with impunity; and now all a-glow with colours not their own, they are gazed at as the splendid palaces of happiness and power. But in all ages there have been a few who, measuring and sounding the rivers of the vale at the feet of their furthest inaccessible falls, have learnt that the sources must be far higher and far inward; a few, who even in the level streams have detected elements which neither the vale itself nor the surrounding mountains contained or could supply. How and whence to these thoughts, these strong probabilities, the ascertaining vision, the intuitive knowledge, may finally supervene, can be learnt only by the fact. I might oppose to the question the words with which Plotinus\* supposes nature to answer a similar difficulty: "Should any one interrogate her, how she works, if graciously she vouchsafe to listen and speak, she will reply, it behoves thee not to disquiet me with interrogatories, but to understand in silence, even as I am silent, and work without words."

we attempt to render the most copious language of the world, the most admirable for the fineness of its distinctions, into one of the poorest and most vague languages? Especially, when we reflect on the comparative number of the works, still extant, written while the Greek and Latin were living languages. Were I asked, what I deemed the greatest and most unmixed benefit, which a wealthy individual, or an association of wealthy individuals could bestow on their country and on mankind, I should not hesitate to answer, "a philosophical English dictionary; with the Greek, Latin, German, French, Spanish and Italian synonymes, and with correspondent indexes." That the learned languages might thereby be acquired, better, in half the time, is but a part, and not the most important part, of the advantages which would accrue from such a work. O! if it should be permitted by Providence, that without detriment to freedom and independence our government might be enabled to become more than a committee for war and revenue! There was a time, when every thing was to be done by Government. Have we not flown off to the contrary extreme?

\* Ennead iii. l. 8. c. 3. The force of the Greek *συνίεναι* is imperfectly expressed by "understand;" our own idiomatic phrase "*to go along with me*" comes nearest to it. The passage that follows, full of profound sense, appears to me evidently corrupt; and in fact no writer more wants, better deserves, or is less likely to obtain, a new and more correct edition.—*τί οὖν συνίεναι; ὅτι τὸ γινόμενον ἐστὶ θέαμα ἑμὸν, σιωπῆσις (mallem, θέαμα, ἐμοῦ σιωπῆσις), καὶ φύσει γινόμενον θεωρημα καὶ μοι γινόμενῃ ἐκ θεωρίας τῆς αὐτῆς ὥδης, τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν φιλαθεάμονα ὑπάρκει. (mallem, καὶ μοι ἡ γινόμενῃ ἐκ θεωρίας αὐτῆς ὥδης.)* "What then are we to understand? That whatever is produced is an intuition, I silent; and that, which is thus generated, is by its nature a theorem, or form of contemplation; and the birth, which results to me from this contemplation, attains to have a contemplative nature." So Synesius; *Ὡδὲς ἱερὰ, Ἀρρητὰ Ποῦά*. The after comparison of the process of the *natura naturans* with that of the geometrician is drawn from the very heart of philosophy.

Likewise in the fifth book of the fifth Ennead, speaking of the highest and intuitive knowledge as distinguished from the discursive, or in the language of Wordsworth :

"The vision and the faculty divine ;"

he says : "it is not lawful to inquire from whence it sprang, as if it were a thing subject to place and motion ; for it neither approached hither, nor again departs from hence to some other place ; but it either appears to us or it does not appear. So that we ought not to pursue it with a view of detecting its secret source, but to watch in quiet till it suddenly shines upon us ; preparing ourselves for the blessed spectacle, as the eye waits patiently for the rising sun." They, and they only, can acquire the philosophic imagination, the sacred power of self-intuition, who within themselves can interpret and understand the symbol, that the wings of the air-sylph are forming within the skin of the caterpillar ; those only, who feel in their own spirits the same instinct which impels the chrysalis of the horned fly to leave room in its involucre for antennæ yet to come. They know and feel that the potential works in them, even as the actual works on them ! In short, all the organs of sense are framed for a corresponding world of sense, and we have it. All the organs of spirit are framed for a correspondent world of spirit : though the latter organs are not developed in all alike. But they exist in all, and their first appearance discloses itself in the moral being. How else could it be, that even worldlings, not wholly debased, will contemplate the man of simple and disinterested goodness with contradictory feelings of pity and respect ? "Poor man ! he is not made for this world." Oh ! herein they utter a prophecy of universal fulfilment ; for man must either rise or sink.

It is the essential mark of the true philosopher to rest satisfied with no imperfect light, as long as the impossibility of attaining a fuller knowledge has not been demonstrated. That the common consciousness itself will furnish proofs by its own direction, that it is connected with master-currents below the surface, I shall merely assume as a postulate *pro tempore*. This having been granted, though but in expectation of the argument, I can safely deduce from it the equal truth of my former assertion, that philosophy cannot be intelligible to all, even of the most learned and cultivated classes. A system, the first principle of which it is to render the mind intuitive of the spiritual in man (i. e., of that which lies on the other side of our natural consciousness), must needs have a great obscurity for those who have never disciplined

and strengthened this ulterior consciousness. It must, in truth, be a land of darkness, a perfect anti-Goshen, for men to whom the noblest treasures of their own being are reported only through the imperfect translation of lifeless and sightless notions. Perhaps in great part, through words which are but the shadows of notions, even as the notional understanding itself is but the shadowy abstraction of living and actual truth. On the immediate, which dwells in every man, and on the original intuition, or absolute affirmation of it (which is likewise in every man, but does not in every man rise into consciousness), all the certainty of our knowledge depends; and this becomes intelligible to no man by the ministry of mere words from without. The medium by which spirits understand each other is not the surrounding air, but the freedom which they possess in common, as the common ethereal element of their being, the tremulous reciprocations of which propagate themselves even to the inmost of the soul. Where the spirit of a man is not filled with the consciousness of freedom (were it only from its restlessness, as of one still struggling in bondage) all spiritual intercourse is interrupted, not only with others, but even with himself. No wonder, then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder that, in "the fearful desert of his consciousness," he wearies himself out with empty words, to which no friendly echo answers, either from his own heart, or the heart of a fellow being, or bewilders himself in the pursuit of notional phantoms, the mere refractions from unseen and distant truths through the distorting medium of his own unenlivened and stagnant understanding! To remain unintelligible to such a mind, exclaims Schelling on a like occasion, is honour and a good name before God and man.

The history of philosophy (the same writer observes) contains instances of systems which, for successive generations have remained enigmatic. Such he deems the system of Leibnitz, whom another writer (rashly, I think, and invidiously) extols as the only philosopher who was himself deeply convinced of his own doctrines. As hitherto interpreted, however, they have not produced the effect which Leibnitz himself, in a most instructive passage, describes as the criterion of a true philosophy; namely, that it would at once explain and collect the fragments of truth scattered through systems apparently the most incongruous. The truth, says he, is diffused more widely than is commonly believed; but it is often painted, yet oftener masked, and is sometimes mutilated, and sometimes, alas! in close alliance with mischievous errors. The deeper, however, we penetrate into the ground of things, the

more truth we discover in the doctrines of the greater number of the philosophical sects. The want of substantial reality in the objects of the senses, according to the sceptics; the harmonies or numbers, the prototypes and ideas, to which the Pythagoreans and Platonists reduced all things; the one and all of Parmenides and Plotinus, without Spinozism;\* the necessary connection of things, according to the Stoics, reconcileable with the spontaneity of the other schools; the vital-philosophy of the Cabalists and Hermetists, who assumed the universality of sensation; the substantial forms and *entelechies* of Aristotle and the schoolmen, together with the mechanical solution of all particular phenomena, according to Democritus and the recent philosophers; all these we shall find united in one perspective central point, which shows regularity and a coincidence of all the parts in the very object, which from every other point of view must appear confused and distorted. The spirit of sectarianism has been hitherto our fault, and the cause of our failures. We have imprisoned our own conceptions by the lines which we have drawn, in order to exclude the conceptions of others. *J'ai trouvé que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas tant en ce qu'elles nient.*

A system which aims to deduce the memory with all the other functions of intelligence, must of course place its first position from beyond the memory, and anterior to it, otherwise the principle of solution would be itself a part of the problem to be solved. Such a position, therefore, must in the first instance be demanded, and the first question will be, by what right is it demanded? On this account I think it expedient to make some preliminary remarks on the introduction of Postulates in philosophy. The word pos-

\* This is happily effected in three lines by Synesius, in his Third Hymn:—

'Εν καὶ Πάντα—(taken by itself) is Spinozism,

'Εν δ' Ἀπάντων—a mere *anima Mundi*.

'Εν τε πρὸ πάντων—is mechanical Theism.

But unite all three, and the result is the Theism of Saint Paul and Christianity.

Synesius was censured for his doctrine of the Pre-existence of the Soul; but never, that I can find, arraigned or deemed heretical for his Pantheism, though neither Giordano Bruno, or Jacob Behmen ever avowed it more broadly.

Μύστας δὲ Νόος,  
Τά τε καὶ τὰ λέγει,  
Βυθὸν ἄρρητον  
Ἀμφιχρυσέων.  
Σὺ τὸ τίκτον ἔφυς,  
Σὺ τὸ τικτόμενον  
Σὺ τὸ φωτίγον,

Σὺ τὸ λαμπόμενον ;  
Σὺ τὸ φαινόμενον,  
Σὺ τὸ κρυπτόμενον  
Ἰδίαις αἰγαῖς,  
'Εν καὶ πάντα,  
'Εν καθ' ἑαυτὸ,  
Καὶ διὰ πάντων

Pantheism is therefore not necessarily irreligious or heretical; though it may be taught atheistically. Thus Spinoza would agree with Synesius in calling God *Φύσις ἐν Νοεῶσι*, the *Nature* in Intelligences; but he could not subscribe to the preceding *Νοῦς καὶ Νοεῶς*, i. e., Himself Intelligence and intelligent.

In this biographical sketch of my literary life I may be excused, if I mention here, that I had translated the eight Hymns of Synesius from the Greek into English Anacreontics before my fifteenth year.

tulate is borrowed from the science of mathematics.\* In geometry the primary construction is not demonstrated, but postulated. This first and most simple construction in space is the point in motion, or the line. Whether the point is moved in one and the same direction, or whether its direction is continually changed, remains as yet undetermined. But if the direction of the point have been determined, it is either by a point without it, and then there arises the straight line which encloses no space; or the direction of the point is not determined by a point without it, and then it must flow back again on itself; that is, there arises a cyclical line which does inclose a space. If the straight line be assumed as the positive, the cyclical is then the negation of the straight. It is a line which at no point strikes out into the straight, but changes its direction continuously. But if the primary line be conceived as undetermined, and the straight line as determined throughout, then the cyclical is the third compounded of both. It is at once undetermined and determined; undetermined through any point without, and determined through itself. Geometry therefore supplies philosophy with the example of a primary intuition, from which every science that lays claim to evidence must take its commencement. The mathematician does not begin with a demonstrable proposition, but with an intuition, a practical idea.

But here an important distinction presents itself. Philosophy is employed on objects of the inner sense, and cannot, like geometry, appropriate to every construction a correspondent outward intuition. Nevertheless philosophy, if it is to arrive at evidence, must proceed from the most original construction; and the question then is, what is the most original construction or first productive act for the inner sense. The answer to this question depends on the direction which is given to the inner sense. But in philosophy the inner sense cannot have its direction determined by any outward object. To the original construction of the line I can be compelled by a line drawn before me on the slate or on sand. The stroke thus drawn is indeed not the line itself, but only the image or picture of the line. It is not from it that we first learn to know the line; but, on the contrary, we bring this stroke to the original line generated by the act of the imagination; otherwise we could not define it as without breadth or thickness. Still however this stroke is the sensuous image of the original or ideal line, and an efficient mean to excite every imagination to the intuition of it.

It is demanded, then, whether there be found any means in phi-

\* See Schell. abhandl. zur Erläuter. des Id. der Wissenschaftslehre.

losophy to determine the direction of the inner sense, as in mathematics it is determinable by its specific image or outward picture. Now, the inner sense has its direction determined for the greater part only by an act of freedom. One man's consciousness extends only to the pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in him by external impressions; another enlarges his inner sense to a consciousness of forms and quantity; a third, in addition to the image, is conscious of the conception or notion of the thing; a fourth attains to a notion of his notions—he reflects on his own reflections; and thus we may say, without impropriety, that the one possesses more or less inner sense than the other. This more or less betrays already that philosophy, in its first principles, must have a practical, or moral, as well as a theoretical or speculative side. This difference in degree does not exist in the mathematics. Socrates, in Plato, shows that an ignorant slave may be brought to understand, and of himself to solve, the most difficult geometrical problem. Socrates drew the figures for the slave in the sand. The disciples of the critical philosophy could likewise (as was indeed actually done by La Forge and some other followers of Des Cartes) represent the origin of our representations in copper-plates, but no one has yet attempted it, and it would be utterly useless. To an Esquimaux or New Zealander our most popular philosophy would be wholly unintelligible. The sense, the inward organ; for it is not yet born in him. So is there many a one among us, yes, and some who think themselves philosophers too, to whom the philosophic organ is entirely wanting. To such a man philosophy is a mere play of words and notions, like a theory of music to the deaf, or like the geometry of light to the blind. The connection of the parts and their logical dependencies may be seen and remembered; but the whole is groundless and hollow, unsustained by living contact, unaccompanied with any realizing intuition which exists by and in the act that affirms its existence, which is known, because it is, and is, because it is known. The words of Plotinus, in the assumed person of Nature, hold true of the philosophic energy. *Τὸ θεωροῦν μοῦ θεώρημα ποιεῖ, ὥσπερ οἱ Γεωμέτραι θεωροῦντες γραφοῦσιν· ἀλλ' ἐμοῦ μὴ γραφοῦσης, θεωροῦσης δὲ, ὑφίστανται αἱ τῶν σωματίων γραμμαί.* With me the act of contemplation makes the thing contemplated, as the geometricians contemplating, describe lines correspondent; but I not describing lines, but simply contemplating, the representative forms of things rise up into existence.

The postulate of philosophy, and at the same time the test of philosophic capacity, is no other than the heaven-descended know

THYSELF! (*E cælo descendit, Γνωθὶ σεαυτόν*). And this at once practically and speculatively. For as philosophy is neither a science of the reason or understanding only, nor merely a science of morals, but the science of BEING altogether, its primary ground can be neither merely speculative or merely practical, but both in one. All knowledge rests on the coincidence of an object with a subject. (My readers have been warned in a former chapter that for their convenience as well as the writer's, the term subject is used by me in its scholastic sense, as equivalent to mind or sentient being, and as the necessary correlative of object, or *quicquid objicitur menti*). For we can know that only which is true; and the truth is universally placed in the coincidence of the thought with the thing, of the representation with the object represented.

Now, the sum of all that is merely objective we will henceforth call nature, confining the term to its passive and material sense, as comprising all the phenomena by which its existence is made known to us. On the other hand, the sum of all that is subjective, we may comprehend in the name of the self or intelligence. Both conceptions are in necessary antithesis. Intelligence is conceived of as exclusively representative, nature as exclusively represented; the one as conscious, the other as without consciousness. Now, in all acts of positive knowledge there is required a reciprocal concurrence of both, namely of the conscious being, and of that which is in itself unconscious. Our problem is to explain this concurrence, its possibility, and its necessity.

During the act of knowledge itself, the objective and subjective are so instantly united, that we cannot determine to which of the two the priority belongs. There is here no first and no second; both are coinstantaneous and one. While I am attempting to explain this intimate coalition, I must suppose it dissolved. I must necessarily set out from the one, to which therefore I give hypothetical antecedence, in order to arrive at the other. But as there are but two factors or elements in the problem, subject and object, and as it is left indeterminate from which of them I should commence, there are two cases equally possible.

1. EITHER THE OBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THEN WE HAVE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE SUPERVENTION OF THE SUBJECTIVE, WHICH COALESCES WITH IT.

The notion of the subjective is not contained in the notion of the objective. On the contrary, they mutually exclude each other. The subjective therefore must supervene to the objective. The conception of nature does not apparently involve the co-presence of the



intelligence, making an ideal duplicate of it, i.e., representing it. This desk, for instance, would, according to our natural notions, be, though there should exist no sentient being to look at it. This then is the problem of natural philosophy. It assumes the objective or unconscious nature as the first, and has therefore to explain how intelligence can supervene to it, or how itself can grow into intelligence. If it should appear that all enlightened naturalists, without having distinctly proposed the problem to themselves, have yet constantly moved in the line of its solution, it must afford a strong presumption that the problem itself is founded in nature. For if all knowledge has, as it were, two poles reciprocally required and presupposed, all sciences must proceed from the one or the other, and must tend towards the opposite as far as the equatorial point in which both are reconciled and become identical. The necessary tendency therefore of all natural philosophy is from nature to intelligence; and this, and no other, is the true ground and occasion of the instinctive striving to introduce theory into our views of natural phenomena. The highest perfection of natural philosophy would consist in the perfect spiritualization of all the laws of nature into laws of intuition and intellect. The phenomena (*the material*) must wholly disappear, and the laws alone (*the formal*) must remain. Thence it comes, that in nature itself the more the principle of law breaks forth, the more does the *husk* drop off, the phenomena themselves become more spiritual and at length cease altogether in our consciousness. The optical phenomena are but a geometry, the lines of which are drawn by light, and the materiality of this light itself has already become matter of doubt. In the appearances of magnetism all trace of matter is lost, and of the phenomena of gravitation, which not a few among the most illustrious Newtonians have declared no otherwise comprehensible than as an immediate spiritual influence, there remains nothing but its law, the execution of which, on a vast scale, is the mechanism of the heavenly motions. The theory of natural philosophy would then be completed, when all nature was demonstrated to be identical in essence with that which in its highest known power exists in man as intelligence and self-consciousness; when the heavens and the earth shall declare not only the power of their Maker, but the glory and the presence of their God, even as He appeared to the great prophet during the vision of the mount in the skirts of His divinity.

This may suffice to show that even natural science, which commences with the material phenomenon as the reality and substance of things existing, does yet, by the necessity of theorising uncon-

sciously, and as it were instinctively, end in nature as an intelligence; and by this tendency the science of nature becomes finally natural philosophy, the one of the two poles of fundamental science.

2. OR THE SUBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THE PROBLEM THEN IS, HOW THERE SUPERVENES TO IT A COINCIDENT OBJECTIVE.

In the pursuit of these sciences, our success in each depends on an austere and faithful adherence to its own principles, with a careful separation and exclusion of those which appertain to the opposite science. As the natural philosopher, who directs his views to the objective, avoids above all things the intermixture of the subjective in his knowledge; as for instance, arbitrary suppositions, or rather suffictions, occult qualities, spiritual agents, and the substitution of final for efficient causes; so, on the other hand, the transcendental or intelligential philosopher is equally anxious to preclude all interpolation of the objective into the subjective principles of his science: as, for instance, the assumption of impressions or configurations in the brain, correspondent to miniature pictures on the retina painted by rays of light from supposed originals, which are not the immediate and real objects of vision, but deductions from it for the purposes of explanation. This purification of the mind is effected by an absolute and scientific scepticism to which the mind voluntarily determines itself for the specific purpose of future certainty. Des Cartes, who, in his meditations, himself first, at least of the moderns, gave a beautiful example of this voluntary doubt, this self-determined indetermination, happily expresses its utter difference from the scepticism of vanity or irreligion: *Nec tamen in eo scepticos imitabar, qui dubitant tantum ut dubitent, et præter incertitudinem ipsam nihil quaerunt. Nam contra totus in eo eram ut aliquid certi reperirem.*\* Nor is it less distinct in its motives and final aim, than in its proper objects, which are not, as in ordinary scepticism, the prejudices of education and circumstance, but those original and innate prejudices which nature herself has planted in all men, and which, to all but the philosopher, are the first principles of knowledge, and the final test of truth.

Now, these essential prejudices are all reducible to the one fundamental presumption, that there exist things without us. As this on the one hand originates neither in grounds or arguments, and yet on the other hand remains proof against all attempts to remove it by grounds or arguments (*naturam furca expellas tamen*

\* DES CARTES, de *Methodo*.

*usque redibit*); on the one hand lays claim to immediate certainty as a position at once indemonstrable and irresistible, and yet, on the other hand, inasmuch as it refers to something essentially different from ourselves, nay even in opposition to ourselves, leaves it inconceivable how it could possibly become a part of our immediate consciousness; in other words, how that which *ex hypothesi* is and continues to be extrinsic and alien to our being should become a modification of our being: the philosopher, therefore, compels himself to treat this faith as nothing more than a prejudice, innate indeed and connatural, but still a prejudice.

The other position, which not only claims but necessitates the admission of its immediate certainty, equally for the scientific reason of the philosopher as for the common sense of mankind at large, namely, I am, cannot so properly be entitled a prejudice. It is groundless indeed; but then in the very idea it precludes all ground, and separated from the immediate consciousness loses its whole sense and import. It is groundless; but only because it is itself the ground of all other certainty. Now the apparent contradiction, that the former position, namely, the existence of things without us, which from its nature cannot be immediately certain should be received as blindly and as independently of all grounds as the existence of our own being, the transcendental philosopher can solve only by the supposition, that the former is unconsciously involved in the latter; that it is not only coherent but identical, and one and the same thing with our own immediate self-consciousness. To demonstrate this identity is the office and object of his philosophy.

If it be said that this is idealism, let it be remembered that it is only so far idealism, as it is at the same time, and on that very account, the truest and most binding realism. For wherein does the realism of mankind properly consist? In the assertion that there exists a something without them, what, or how, or where they know not, which occasions the objects of their perception? Oh no! This is neither connatural or universal. It is what a few have taught and learnt in the schools, and which the many repeat without asking themselves concerning their own meaning. The realism common to all mankind is far elder and lies infinitely deeper than this hypothetical explanation of the origin of our perceptions, an explanation skimmed from the mere surface of mechanical philosophy. It is the table itself, which the man of common sense believes himself to see, not the phantom of a table, from which he may argumentatively deduce the reality of a table, which he does not see. If to destroy the reality of all that we

actually behold, be idealism, what can be more egregiously so than the system of modern metaphysics, which banishes us to a land of shadows, surrounds us with apparitions, and distinguishes truth from illusion only by the majority of those who dream the same dream? "I asserted that the world was mad," exclaimed poor Lee, "and the world said, that I was mad, and confound them, they outvoted me." \*

It is to the true and original realism, that I would direct the attention. This believes and requires neither more nor less, than that the object which it beholds or presents to itself, is the real and very object. In this sense, however much we may strive against it, we are all collectively born idealists, and therefore, and only therefore, are we at the same time realists. But of this the philosophers of the schools know nothing, or despise the faith as the prejudice of the ignorant vulgar, because they live and move in a crowd of phrases and notions from which human nature has long ago vanished. Oh, ye that reverence yourselves, and walk humbly with the divinity in your own hearts, ye are worthy of a better philosophy! Let the dead bury the dead, but do you preserve your human nature, the depth of which was never yet fathomed by a philosophy made up of notions and mere logical entities.

In the third treatise of my *Logosophia*, announced at the end of this volume, I shall give (*Deo volente*) the demonstrations and constructions of the Dynamic Philosophy scientifically arranged. It is, according to my conviction, no other than the system of Pythagoras and of Plato revived and purified from impure mixtures. *Doctrina per tot manus tradita tandem in vappam desiit!* The science of arithmetic furnishes instances, that a rule may be useful in practical application, and for the particular purpose may be sufficiently authenticated by the result, before it has itself been fully demonstrated. It is enough, if only it be rendered intelligible. This will, I trust, have been effected in the following Theses for those of my readers who are willing to accompany me through the following chapter, in which the results will be applied to the deduction of the imagination; and with it the principles of production and of genial criticism in the fine arts.

#### THESIS I.

Truth is correlative to being. Knowledge without a correspondent reality is no knowledge; if we know, there must be somewhat known by us. To know is in its very essence a verb active.

THESIS II.

All truth is either mediate, that is, derived from some other truth or truths; or immediate and original. The latter is absolute, and its formula A. A.; the former is of dependent or conditional certainty, and represented in the formula B. A. The certainty, which inheres in A. is attributable to B.

SCHOLIUM. A chain without a staple, from which all the links derived their stability, or a series without a first, has been not inaptly allegorized as a string of blind men, each holding the skirt of the man before him, reaching far out of sight, but all moving without the least deviation in one straight line. It would be naturally taken for granted, that there was a guide at the head of the file: what if it were answered, No! Sir, the men are without number, and infinite blindness supplies the place of sight?

Equally inconceivable is a cycle of equal truths without a common and central principle, which prescribes to each its proper sphere in the system of science. That the absurdity does not so immediately strike us, that it does not seem equally unimaginable, is owing to a surreptitious act of the imagination, which, instinctively and without our noticing the same, not only fills up the intervening spaces, and contemplates the cycle of (B. C. D. E. F. &c.) as a continuous circle (A.) giving to all collectively the unity of their common orbit; but likewise supplies by a sort of *subintelligitur* the one central power, which renders the movement harmonious and cyclical.

THESIS III.

We are to seek therefore for some absolute truth capable of communicating to other positions a certainty, which it has not itself borrowed; a truth self-grounded, unconditional, and known by its own light. In short, we have to find a somewhat which is, simply because it is. In order to be such, it must be one which is its own predicate, so far at least that all other nominal predicates must be modes and repetitions of itself. Its existence too must be such as to preclude the possibility of requiring a cause or antecedent without an absurdity.

THESIS IV.

That there can be but one such principle, may be proved *a priori*; for were there two or more, each must refer to some other, by which its equality is affirmed; consequently, neither would be self-established, as the hypothesis demands. And *a posteriori*, it

will be proved by the principle itself, when it is discovered, as involving universal antecedents in its very conception.

SCHOLIUM. If we affirm of a board that it is blue, the predicate (blue) is accidental, and not implied in the subject, board. If we affirm of a circle that it is equi-radial, the predicate indeed is implied in the definition of the subject: but the existence of the subject itself is contingent, and supposes both a cause and a percipient. The same reasoning will apply to the indefinite number of supposed indemonstrable truths exempted from the profane approach of philosophic investigation by the amiable Beattie, and other less eloquent and not more profound inaugurators of common sense on the throne of philosophy; a fruitless attempt, were it only that it is the two-fold function of philosophy to reconcile reason with common sense, and to elevate common sense into reason.

#### THESIS V.

Such a principle cannot be any thing or object. Each thing is what it is in consequence of some other thing. An infinite, independent thing,\* is no less a contradiction than an infinite circle or a sideless triangle. Besides a thing is that which is capable of being an object of which itself is not the sole percipient. But an object is inconceivable without a subject as its antithesis. *Omne perceptum percipientem supponit.*

But neither can the principle be found in a subject as a subject, contra-distinguished from an object: for *unicuique percipienti aliquid obicitur perceptum.* It is to be found therefore neither in object nor subject taken separately, and consequently, as no other third is conceivable, it must be found in that which is neither subject nor object exclusively, but which is the identity of both.

#### THESIS VI.

This principle, and so characterised, manifests itself in the SUM or I AM; which I shall hereafter indiscriminately express by the words spirit, self, and self-consciousness. In this, and in this alone, object and subject, being and knowing, are identical, each involving and supposing the other. In other words, it is a subject which becomes a subject by the act of constructing itself objectively to itself; but which never is an object except for itself, and only so far as by the very same act it becomes a subject. It may be described therefore as a perpetual self-duplication of

\* The impossibility of an absolute thing (substantia unica) as neither genus, species, nor individuum: as well as its utter unsuitableness for the fundamental position of a philo-

sophic system, will be demonstrated in the critique on Spinozism in the fifth treatise of my Logosophy.

one and the same power into object and subject, which pre-suppose each other, and can exist only as antitheses.

SCHOLIUM. If a man be asked how he knows that he is? he can only answer, *sum quia sum*. But if (the absoluteness of this certainty having been admitted) he be again asked, how he, the individual person, came to be, then, in relation to the ground of his existence, not to the ground of his knowledge of that existence, he might reply, *sum quia Deus est*, or still more philosophically, *sum quia in Deo sum*.

But if we elevate our conception to the absolute self, the great eternal I AM, then the principle of being, and of knowledge, of idea, and of reality, the ground of existence, and the ground of the knowledge of existence, are absolutely identical, *Sum quia sum*;\* I am, because I affirm myself to be; I affirm myself to be, because I am.

### THESIS VII.

If then I know myself only through myself, it is contradictory to require any other predicate of self, but that of self-consciousness. Only in the self-consciousness of a spirit is there the required identity of object and of representation; for herein consists the essence of a spirit, that it is self-representative. If therefore this be the one only immediate truth, in the certainty of which the reality of our collective knowledge is grounded, it must follow that the spirit in all the objects which it views, views only itself. If this could be proved, the immediate reality of all intuitive knowledge would be assured. It has been shown,

\* It is most worthy of notice, that in the first revelation of Himself, not confined to individuals, indeed in the very first revelation of His absolute being, Jehovah at the same time revealed the fundamental truth of all philosophy, which must either commence with the absolute, or have no fixed commencement; i. e. cease to be philosophy. I cannot but express my regret, that in the equivocal use of the word *that*, for *in that*, or *because*, our admirable version has rendered the passage susceptible of a degraded interpretation in the mind of common readers or hearers, as if it were a mere reproof to an impertinent question, I am what I am, which might be equally affirmed of himself by any existent being.

The Cartesian *Cogito ergo sum* is objectionable, because either the *Cogito* is used *extra Gradum*, and then it is involved in the *sum* and is tautological, or it is taken as a particular mode or dignity, and then it is subordinated to the *sum* as the species to the genus, or rather as a particular modification to the subject modified; and not pre-ordinated as

the arguments seem to require. For *Cogito* is *Sum Cogitans*. This is clear by the evidence of the converse. *Cogitat ergo est* is true, because it is a mere application of the logical rule: *Quicquid in genere est, est et in specie. Est (cogitans) ergo est*. It is a cherry tree; therefore it is a tree. But, *est ergo cogitat*, is illogical: for *quod est in specie, non necessario in genere est*. It may be true. I hold it to be true, that *quicquid vere est, est per veram sui affirmationem*; but it is a derivative, not an immediate truth. Here then we have, by anticipation, the distinction between the conditional finite I (which as known in distinct consciousness by occasion of experience is called by Kant's followers the empirical I) and the absolute I AM, and likewise the dependence or rather the inherence of the former in the latter; in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," as St. Paul divinely asserts, differing widely from the Theists of the mechanic school (as Sir I. Newton, Locke, &c.) who must say from whom we had our being, and with it life and the powers of life.

What a spirit is that which is its own object, yet not originally an object, but an absolute subject for which all, itself included, may become an object. It must therefore be an act; for every object is, as an object, dead, fixed, incapable in itself of any action, and necessarily finite. Again, the spirit (originally the identity of object and subject) must in some sense dissolve this identity, in order to be conscious of it: *fit alter et idem*. But this implies an act, and it follows therefore that intelligence or self-consciousness is impossible, except by and in a will. The self-conscious spirit therefore is a will, and freedom must be assumed as a ground of philosophy, and can never be deduced from it.

#### THESIS VIII.

Whatever in its origin is objective, is likewise as such necessarily finite. Therefore, since the spirit is not originally an object, and as the subject exists in antithesis to an object, the spirit cannot originally be finite. But neither can it be a subject without becoming an object, and as it is originally the identity of both, it can be conceived neither as infinite nor finite exclusively, but as the most original union of both. In the existence, in the reconciling, and the recurrence of this contradiction consists the process and mystery of production and life.

#### THESIS IX.

This *principium commune essendi et cognoscendi*, as subsisting in a will, or primary act of self-duplication, is the mediate or indirect principle of every science; but it is the immediate and direct principle of the ultimate science alone, i. e., of transcendental philosophy alone. For it must be remembered, that all these Theses refer solely to one of the two Polar Sciences, namely, to that which commences with and rigidly confines itself within the subjective, leaving the objective (as far as it is exclusively objective) to natural philosophy, which is its opposite pole. In its very idea therefore as a systematic knowledge of our collective knowing (*scientia scientiæ*), it involves the necessity of some one highest principle of knowing, as at once the source and the accompanying form in all particular acts of intellect and perception. This, it has been shown, can be found only in the act and evolution of self-consciousness. We are not investigating an absolute *principium essendi*; for then, I admit, many valid objections might be started against our theory; but an absolute *principium cognoscendi*. The result of both the sciences, or their equatorial point, would be the principle of a total and undivided philosophy, as for prudential reasons, I have chosen to anticipate in the Scho-



lium to Thesis VI. and the note subjoined. In other words, philosophy would pass into religion, and religion become inclusive of philosophy. We begin with the *I know myself*, in order to end with the absolute *I am*. We proceed from the self, in order to lose and find all self in God.

#### THESES X.

The transcendental philosopher does not inquire what ultimate ground of our knowledge there may lie out of our knowing, but what is the last in our knowing itself, beyond which we cannot pass. The principle of our knowing is sought within the sphere of our knowing. It must be something therefore which can itself be known. It is asserted only, that the act of self-consciousness is for *us* the source and principle of all our possible knowledge. Whether abstracted from *us* there exists anything higher and beyond this primary self-knowing, which is for *us* the form of all our knowing, must be decided by the result.

That the self-consciousness is the fixed point, to which for *us* all is mortised and annexed, needs no further proof. But that the self-consciousness may be the modification of a higher form of being, perhaps of a higher consciousness, and this again of a yet higher, and so on in an infinite *regressus*; in short, that self-consciousness may be itself something explicable into something, which must lie beyond the possibility of our knowledge, because the whole synthesis of our intelligence is first formed in and through the self-consciousness, does not at all concern us as transcendental philosophers. For to *us* the self-consciousness is not a kind of being, but a kind of knowing, and that too the highest and farthest that exists for *us*. It may however be shown, and has in part already been shown in pages 55, 56, that even when the objective is assumed as the first, we yet can never pass beyond the principle of self-consciousness. Should we attempt it, we must be driven back from ground to ground, each of which would cease to be a ground the moment we pressed on it. We must be whirled down the gulf of an infinite series. But this would make our reason baffle the end and purpose of all reason, namely, unity and system. Or we must break off the series arbitrarily, and affirm an absolute something that is in and of itself at once cause and effect (*causa sui*) subject and object, or rather the absolute identity of both. But as this is inconceivable, except in a self-consciousness, it follows, that even as natural philosophers we must arrive at the same principle from which as transcendental philosophers we set out; that is, in a self-consciousness in which

the *principium essendi* does not stand to the *principium cognoscendi* in the relation of cause to effect, but both the one and the other are co-inherent and identical. Thus the true system of natural philosophy places the sole reality of things in an absolute, which is at once *causa sui et effectus παρὴν αὐτοπάρερ, ὕδὸς ἐαυτοῦ*—in the absolute identity of subject and object, which it calls Nature, and \* which in its highest power is nothing else but self-conscious will or intelligence. In this sense the position of Malbranche, that we see all things in God, is a strict philosophical truth; and equally true is the assertion of Hobbes, of Hartley, and of their masters in ancient Greece, that all real knowledge supposes a prior sensation. For sensation itself is but vision nascent, not the cause of intelligence, but intelligence itself revealed as an earlier power in the process of self-construction.

Μάκαρ, ἴλαθί μοι !  
 Πάτερ, ἴλαθί μοι  
 Εἰ παρὰ κόσμον,  
 Εἰ παρὰ μοῖραν  
 Τῶν σῶν ἔθιγον !

Bearing then this in mind, that intelligence is a self-development, not a quality supervening to a substance, we may abstract from all degree, and for the purpose of philosophic construction reduce it to kind, under the idea of an indestructible power with two opposite and counteracting forces, which by a metaphor borrowed from astronomy, we may call the centrifugal and centripetal forces. The intelligence in the one tends to objectize itself, and in the other to know itself in the object. It will be hereafter my business to construct by a series of intuitions the progressive schemes that must follow from such a power with such forces, till I arrive at the fulness of the human intelligence. For my present purpose, I assume such a power as my principle, in order to deduce from it a faculty, the generation, agency, and application of which form the contents of the ensuing chapter.

In a preceding page I have justified the use of technical terms in philosophy, whenever they tend to preclude confusion of thought, and when they assist the memory by the exclusive singleness of their meaning more than they may, for a short time, bewilder the attention by their strangeness. I trust, that I have not extended this privilege beyond the grounds on which I have claimed it; namely, the conveniency of the scholastic phrase to distinguish the kind from all degrees, or rather to express the kind with the abstraction of degree, as for instance multitude

instead of multitude; or secondly, for the sake of correspondence in sound in interdependent or antithetical terms, as subject and object; or lastly, to avoid the wearying recurrence of circumlocutions and definitions. Thus I shall venture to use *potence*, in order to express a specific degree of a power, in imitation of the Algebraists. I have even hazarded the new verb *potenziate*, with its derivatives, in order to express the combination or transfer of powers. It is with new or unusual terms, as with privileges in courts of justice or legislature—there can be no legitimate privilege, where there already exists a positive law adequate to the purpose; and when there is no law in existence, the privilege is to be justified by its accordance with the end, or final cause, of all law. Unusual and new coined words are doubtless an evil; but vagueness, confusion, and imperfect conveyance of our thoughts, are a far greater. Every system, which is under the necessity of using terms not familiarized by the metaphysics in fashion, will be described as written in an unintelligible style, and the author must expect the charge of having substituted learned jargon for clear conception; while, according to the creed of our modern philosophers, nothing is deemed a clear conception, but what is representable by a distinct image. Thus the conceivable is reduced within the bounds of the picturable. *Hinc patet, quæ fiat ut, cum irrepræsentabile et impossibile vulgo ejusdem significatûs habeantur, conceptus tam continui, quam infiniti, a plurimis rejiciantur, quippe quorum, secundum leges cognitionis intuitivæ, repræsentatio est impossibilis. Quanquam autem harum e non paucis scholis explosarum notionum, præsertim prioris, causam hic non gero, maximi tamen momenti erit monuisse: gravissimo illos errore labi, qui tam perversâ argumentandi ratione utuntur. Quicquid enim repugnat legibus intellectûs et rationis, utique est impossibile; quod autem, cum rationis puræ sit objectum, legibus cognitionis intuitivæ tantummodo non subest, non item. Nam hic dissensus inter facultatem sensitivam et intellectualem, (quarum indolem mox exponam) nihil indigitat, nisi, quas mens ab intellectu acceptas fert ideas abstractas, illas in concreto exsequi, et in intuitus commutare sæpenumero non posse. Hæc autem reluctantia subjectiva mentitur, ut plurimum, repugnantiam aliquam objectivam, et incautos facile fallit, limitibus, quibus mens humana circumscribitur, pro iis habitis, quibus ipsa rerum essentia continetur.\**

\* *Kant de Mundi Sensibilis atque Intelligibilis forma et principiis*, 1770.

## TRANSLATION.

"Hence it is clear, from what cause many

reject the notion of the continuous and the infinite. They take, namely, the words irre-presentable and impossible in one and the same meaning; and, according to the forms of sensuous evidence, the notion of the con-

Critics, who are most ready to bring this charge of pedantry and unintelligibility, are the most apt to overlook the important fact, that besides the language of words, there is a language of spirits (*sermo interior*), and that the former is only the vehicle of the latter. Consequently their assurance, that they do not understand the philosophic writer, instead of proving anything against the philosophy, may furnish an equal and (*cæteris paribus*) even a stronger presumption against their own philosophic talent.

Great indeed are the obstacles which an English metaphysician has to encounter. Amongst his most respectable and intelligent judges, there will be many who have devoted their attention exclusively to the concerns and interests of human life, and who bring with them to the perusal of a philosophic system an habitual aversion to all speculations, the utility and application of which are not evident and immediate. To these I would in the first instance merely oppose an authority, which they themselves hold venerable, that of Lord Bacon: *non inutiles scientiæ existimandæ sunt, quarum in se nullus est usus, si ingenia acuant et ordinant.*

There are others whose prejudices are still more formidable, inasmuch as they are grounded in their moral feelings and religious principles, which had been alarmed and shocked by the impious and pernicious tenets defended by Hume, Priestley, and the French fatalists or necessitarians; some of whom had perverted metaphysical reasonings to the denial of the mysteries and indeed of all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity; and others even to the subversion of all distinction between right and wrong. I would request such men to consider what an eminent and suc-

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tinuous and the infinite is doubtless impossible. I am not now pleading the cause of these laws, which not a few schools have thought proper to explode, especially the former (the law of continuity). But it is of the highest importance to admonish the reader, that those who adopt so perverted a mode of reasoning, are under a grievous error. Whatever opposes the formal principles of the understanding and the reason is confessedly impossible; but not therefore that, which is therefore not amenable to the forms of sensuous evidence, because it is exclusively an object of pure intellect. For this non-coincidence of the sensuous and the intellectual (the nature of which I shall presently lay open) proves nothing more, but that the mind cannot always adequately represent in the concrete, and transform into distinct images, abstract notions, derived from the pure intellect. But this contradiction, which

is in itself merely subjective (*i. e.* an incapacity in the nature of man) too often passes for an incongruity or impossibility in the object (*i. e.* the notions themselves) and seduces the incautious to mistake the limitations of the human faculties for the limits of things, as they really exist."

I take this occasion to observe, that here and elsewhere Kant uses the terms intuition, and the verb active (*Intueri*, Germanice *Anschauen*) for which we have unfortunately no correspondent word, exclusively for that which can be represented in space and time. He therefore consistently and rightly denies the possibility of intellectual intuitions. But as I see no adequate reason for this exclusive sense of the term, I have reverted to its wider signification authorized by our elder theologians and metaphysicians, according to whom the term comprehends all truths known to us without a medium.

cessful defender of the Christian faith has observed, that true metaphysics are nothing else but true divinity, and that, in fact, the writers, who have given them such just offence, were sophists, who had taken advantage of the general neglect into which the science of logic has unhappily fallen, rather than metaphysicians, a name indeed which those writers were the first to explode as unmeaning. Secondly, I would remind them, that as long as there are men in the world to whom the *Γνώθι σεαυτόν* is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be metaphysicians and metaphysical speculations; that false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone; and that if the reasoning be clear, solid and pertinent, the truth deduced can never be the less valuable on account of the depth from which it may have been drawn. ✓

A third class profess themselves friendly to metaphysics, and believe that they are themselves metaphysicians. They have no objection to system or terminology, provided it be the method and the nomenclature to which they have been familiarized in the writings of Locke, Hume, Hartley, Condillac, or perhaps Dr. Reid, and Professor Stewart. To objections from this cause it is a sufficient answer, that one main object of my attempt was to demonstrate the vagueness or insufficiency of the terms used in the metaphysical schools of France and Great Britain since the Revolution, and that the errors which I propose to attack cannot subsist, except as they are concealed behind the mask of a plausible and indefinite nomenclature.

But the worst and widest impediment still remains. It is the predominance of a popular philosophy, at once the counterfeit and the mortal enemy of all true and manly metaphysical research. It is that corruption, introduced by certain immethodical aphorising Eclectics, who, dismissing not only all system, but all logical connection, pick and choose whatever is most plausible and showy; who select whatever words can have some semblance of sense attached to them without the least expenditure of thought, in short, whatever may enable men to talk of what they do not understand, with a careful avoidance of everything that might awaken them to a moment's suspicion of their ignorance. This, alas! is an irremediable disease, for it brings with it, not so much an indisposition to any particular system, but an utter loss of taste and faculty for all system and for all philosophy. Like echoes that beget each other amongst the mountains, the praise or blame of such men rolls in volleys long after the report from the original blunderbuss. *Sequacitas est potius et coitio quam consensus:*

*et tamen (quod pessimum est) pusillanimitas ista non sine arrogantia et fastidio se offert.\**

I shall now proceed to the nature and genesis of the imagination; but I must first take leave to notice, that after a more accurate perusal of Mr. Wordsworth's remarks on the Imagination in his preface to the new edition of his poems, I find that my conclusions are not so consentient with his as, I confess, I had taken for granted. In an article contributed by me to Mr. Southey's "Omnia," On the soul and its organs of sense, are the following sentences:—"These (the human faculties) I would arrange under the different senses and powers; as the eye, the ear, the touch, &c.; the imitative power, voluntary and automatic; the imagination, or shaping or modifying power; the fancy, or the aggregative and associative power; the understanding, or the regulative, substantiating and realizing power; the speculative reason—*vis theoretica et scientifica*, or the power by which we produce, or aim to produce, unity, necessity and universality in all our knowledge by means of principles *a priori*;† the will, or practical reason; the faculty of choice (*Germanice*, Willkühr) and (distinct both from the moral will and the choice) the sensation of volition, which I have found reason to include under the head of single and double touch." To this, as far as it relates to the subject in question, namely, the words (the aggregative and associative power), Mr. Wordsworth's "only objection is that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the imagination as the fancy." I reply, that if by the power of evoking and combining, Mr. W. means the same as, and no more than, I meant by the aggregative and associative, I continue to deny that it belongs at all to the imagination; and I am disposed to conjecture that he has mistaken the co-presence of fancy with imagination for the operation of the latter singly. A man may work with two very different tools at the same moment; each has its share in the work, but the work effected by each is distinct and different. But it will probably appear in the next chapter, that deeming it necessary to go back much further than Mr. Wordsworth's subject required or permitted, I have attached a meaning to both fancy and imagination, which he had not in

\* Bacon's *Novum Organum*.

† This phrase, *a priori*, is in common most grossly misunderstood, and an absurdity burdened on it, which it does not deserve! By knowledge, *a priori*, we do not mean, that we can know anything previously to experience, which would be a contradiction in terms; but that having once known it by occasion of ex-

perience (i. e. something acting upon us from without), we then know that it must have pre-existed, or the experience itself would have been impossible. By experience only I know that I have eyes; but then my reason convinces me that I must have had eyes in order to the experience.

view, at least while he was writing that preface. He will judge. Would to heaven, I might meet with many such readers. I will conclude with the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor: "He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit."\*

## CHAPTER XIII.

On the imagination, or esemplastic power.

"O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom  
All things proceed, and up to him return  
If not depraved from good: created all  
Such to perfection, one first nature all  
Indued with various forms, various degrees  
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;  
But more refin'd, more spiritous and pure,  
As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,  
Each in their several active spheres assign'd.  
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root  
Springs lighter the green stalk: from thence the leaves  
More airy: last, the bright consummate flower  
Spirits odorous breathes. Flowers and their fruit,  
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,  
To vital spirits aspire: to animal:  
To intellectual!—give both life and sense,  
Fancy and understanding: whence the soul  
Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
Discursive or intuitive."

PAR. LOST, b. v.

"Sane si res corporales nū nisi materiale continerent, verissime dicerentur in fluxu consistere neque habere substantiale quicquam, quemadmodum et Platonici olim recte agnoscere.—Hinc igitur, præter purè mathematica et phantasias subjecta, collegi quædam metaphysica solidæque mente perceptibilia, esse admittenda: et massæ materiali principium quoddam superius et, ut sic dicam, formale addendum: quandoquidem omnes veritates rerum corporearum ex solis axiomatibus logisticis et geometricis, nempe de magno et parvo, toto et parte, figurâ et situ, colligi non possint: sed alia de causâ et effectu, actioneque et passione, accedere debeant, quibus ordinis rerum rationes salventur. Id principium rerum, an ἐντελέχεια an ψυχήν appellemus, non refert, modo meminerimus, per solam Virium notionem intelligibiliter explicari."

LEIBNITZ: *Op.* T. II. P. II. p. 53.—T. III. p. 321.

Σίβομαι Νοερῶν  
Κρυφίαν τάψιν  
Χρπεῖ ΤΙ ΜΕΣΟΝ  
Οὐ καταχθέν.

SYNESI, *Hymn.* III. l. 231.

**D**ES CARTES, speaking as a naturalist, and in imitation of Archimedes, said, Give me matter and motion and I will construct you the universe. We must of course understand him

\* *Jer. Taylor's* "Via Pacla."

to have meant, I will render the construction of the universe intelligible. In the same sense the transcendental philosopher says: Grant me a nature having two contrary forces, the one of which tends to expand infinitely, while the other strives to apprehend or find itself in this infinity, and I will cause the world of intelligences with the whole system of their representations to rise up before you. Every other science pre-supposes intelligence as already existing and complete: the philosopher contemplates it in its growth, and as it were represents its history to the mind from its birth to its maturity.

The venerable Sage of Koenigsberg has preceded the march of this master-thought as an effective pioneer, in his essay on the introduction of negative quantities into philosophy, published 1763. In this he has shown, that instead of assailing the science of mathematics by metaphysics, as Berkeley did in his "Analyst," or of sophisticating it, as Wolf did, by the vain attempt of deducing the first principles of geometry from supposed deeper grounds of ontology, it behoved the metaphysician rather to examine whether the only province of knowledge which man has succeeded in erecting into a pure science, might not furnish materials or at least hints for establishing and pacifying the unsettled, warring, and embroiled domain of philosophy. An imitation of the mathematical method has indeed been attempted with no better success than attended the essay of David to wear the armour of Saul. Another use, however, is possible and of far greater promise, namely, the actual application of the positions which had so wonderfully enlarged the discoveries of geometry, *mutatis mutandis*, to philosophical subjects. Kant having briefly illustrated the utility of such an attempt in the questions of space, motion, and infinitely small quantities, as employed by the mathematician, proceeds to the idea of negative quantities and the transfer of them to metaphysical investigation. Opposites, he well observes, are of two kinds, either logical, i.e., such as are absolutely incompatible; or real without being contradictory. The former he denominates *Nihil negativum irrepraesentabile*, the connection of which produces nonsense. A body in motion is something—*Aliquid cogitabile*; but a body, at one and the same time in motion and not in motion, is nothing, or at most, air articulated into nonsense. But a motory force of a body in one direction, and an equal force of the same body in an opposite direction, is not incompatible, and the result, namely rest, is real and representable. For the purposes of mathematical calculus it is indifferent which force we term negative, and which positive, and consequently we appro-



priate the latter to that which happens to be the principal object in our thoughts. Thus if a man's capital be ten and his debts eight, the subtraction will be the same, whether we call the capital negative debt, or the debt negative capital. But inasmuch as the latter stands practically in reference to the former, we of course represent the sum as  $10-8$ . It is equally clear that two equal forces acting in opposite directions, both being finite and each distinguished from the other by its direction only, must neutralize or reduce each other to inaction. Now the transcendental philosophy demands, first, that two forces should be conceived which counteract each other by their essential nature; not only not in consequence of the accidental direction of each, but as prior to all direction, nay, as the primary forces from which the conditions of all possible directions are derivative and deducible: secondly, that these forces should be assumed to be both alike infinite, both alike indestructible. [The problem will then be to discover the result or product of two such forces, as distinguished from the result of those forces, which are finite, and derive their difference solely from the circumstance of their direction. When we have formed a scheme or outline of these two different kinds of force, and of their different results by the process of discursive reasoning, it will then remain for us to elevate the Thesis from notional to actual, by contemplating intuitively this one power with its two inherent indestructible yet counteracting forces, and the results or generations to which their inter-penetration gives existence, in the living principle and in the process of our own self-consciousness.] By what instrument this is possible the solution itself will discover, at the same time that it will reveal to and for whom it is possible. *Non omnia possumus omnes*. There is a philosophic, no less than a poetic genius, which is differenced from the highest perfection of talent, not by degree but by kind.

Method

The counteraction then of the two assumed forces does not depend on their meeting from opposite directions; the power which acts in them is indestructible; it is therefore inexhaustibly re-ebullient; and as something must be the result of these two forces, both alike infinite, and both alike indestructible; and as rest or neutralization cannot be this result; no other conception is possible, but that the product must be a *tertium aliquid*, or finite generation. Consequently this conception is necessary. Now this *tertium aliquid* can be no other than an inter-penetration of the counteracting powers, partaking of both.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus far had the work been transcribed for the press, when I received the following letter from a friend, whose practical judgment I have had ample reason to estimate and revere, and whose taste and sensibility preclude all the excuses which my self-love might possibly have prompted me to set up in plea against the decision of advisers of equal good sense, but with less tact and feeling :

" Dear C.

" You ask my opinion concerning your chapter on the Imagination, both as to the impressions it made on myself, and as to those which I think it will make on the public, i.e., that part of the public who, from the title of the work and from its forming a sort of introduction to a volume of poems, are likely to constitute the great majority of your readers.

" As to myself, and stating in the first place the effect on my understanding, your opinions and method of argument were not only so new to me, but so directly the reverse of all I had ever been accustomed to consider as truth, that even if I had comprehended your premises sufficiently to have admitted them, and had seen the necessity of your conclusions, I should still have been in that state of mind, which in your note [see page 36] you have so ingeniously evolved, as the antithesis to that in which a man is, when he makes a bull. In your own words, I should have felt as if I had been standing on my head.

" The effect on my feelings, on the other hand, I cannot better represent, than by supposing myself to have known only our light airy modern chapels of ease, and then for the first time to have been placed, and left alone, in one of our largest Gothic cathedrals, in a gusty moonlight night of autumn. ' Now in glimmer, and now in gloom ;' often in palpable darkness not without a chilly sensation of terror ; then suddenly emerging into broad yet visionary lights with coloured shadows, of fantastic shapes, yet all decked with holy insignia and mystic symbols ; and ever and anon coming out full upon pictures and stone-work images of great men, with whose names I was familiar, but which looked upon me with countenances and an expression, the most dissimilar to all I had been in the habit of connecting with those names. Those whom I had been taught to venerate as almost super-human in magnitude of intellect, I found perched in little fret-work niches, as grotesque dwarfs ; while the grotesques, in my hitherto belief, stood guarding the high altar with all the characters of Apotheosis. In short, what I had supposed substances were thinned away into shadows, while everywhere, shadows were deepened into substances :

' If substance may be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either '

MILTON.

" Yet after all, I could not but repeat the lines which you had quoted

from a MS. poem of your own in *THE FRIEND*, and applied to a work of Mr. Wordsworth's though with a few of the words altered :

————— "An Orphic tale indeed,  
A tale obscure of high and passionate thoughts  
To a strange music chaunted !"

"Be assured, however, that I look forward anxiously to your great book on the Constructive Philosophy, which you have promised and announced : and that I will do my best to understand it. Only I will not promise to descend into the dark cave of Trophonius with you, there to rub my own eyes, in order to make the sparks and figured flashes, which I am required to see.

"So much for myself. But as for the PUBLIC, I do not hesitate a moment in advising and urging you to withdraw the chapter from the present work, and to reserve it for your announced treatise on the Logos or communicative intellect in Man and Deity. First, because imperfectly as I understand the present chapter, I see clearly that you have done too much, and yet not enough. You have been obliged to omit so many links, from the necessity of compression, that what remains looks (if I may recur to my former illustration) like the fragments of the winding steps of an old ruined tower. Secondly, a still stronger argument (at least one that I am sure will be more forcible with you) is, that your readers will have both right and reason to complain of you. This chapter, which cannot, when it is printed, amount to so little as an hundred pages, will of necessity greatly increase the expense of the work ; and every reader who, like myself, is neither prepared or perhaps calculated for the study of so abstruse a subject so abstrusely treated, will, as I have before hinted, be almost entitled to accuse you of a sort of imposition on him. For who, he might truly observe, could from your title-page, viz., 'My Literary Life and Opinions,' published too as introductory to a volume of miscellaneous poems, have anticipated, or even conjectured, a long treatise on ideal Realism, which holds the same relation in abstruseness to Plotinus, as Plotinus does to Plato. It will be well, if already you have not too much of metaphysical disquisition in your work, though as the larger part of the disquisition is historical, it will doubtless be both interesting and instructive to many to whose unprepared minds your speculations on the esemplastic power would be utterly unintelligible. Be assured, if you do publish this chapter in the present work, you will be reminded of Bishop Berkeley's *Siris*, announced as an *Essay on Tar-water*, which beginning with *Tar* ends with the *Trinity*, the omne scibile forming the interspace. I say in the present work. In that greater work to which you have devoted so many years, and study so intense and various, it will be in its proper place. Your prospectus will have described and announced both its contents and their

nature; and if any persons purchase it, who feel no interest in the subjects of which it treats, they will have themselves only to blame.

"I could add to these arguments one derived from pecuniary motives, and particularly from the probable effects on the sale of your present publication; but they would weigh little with you compared with the preceding. Besides, I have long observed, that arguments drawn from your own personal interests more often act on you as narcotics than as stimulants, and that in money concerns you have some small portion of pig-nature in your moral idiosyncrasy, and like these amiable creatures, must occasionally be pulled backward from the boat in order to make you enter it. All success attend you, for if hard thinking and hard reading are merits, you have deserved it.

"Your affectionate, &c."

*grasping mind*  
In consequence of this very judicious letter, which produced complete conviction on my mind, I shall content myself for the present with stating the main result of the chapter, which I have reserved for that future publication, a detailed prospectus of which the reader will find at the close of the second volume.\*

The imagination then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still, at all events, it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.

Fancy, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space; and blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word choice. But equally with the ordinary memory, it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.

Whatever more than this, I shall think it fit to declare concerning the powers and privileges of the imagination in the present work, will be found in the Critical Essay on the uses of the Supernatural in poetry and the principles that regulate its introduction: which the reader will find prefixed to the poem of The Ancient Mariner.

\* Mr. Coleridge did not issue this prospectus.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed—Preface to the second edition—The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony—Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry, with scholia.

**D**URING the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset, diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the "Lyrical Ballads;" in which it was agreed that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote the "Ancient Mariner," and was preparing, among other poems, the "Dark Ladie," and the "Christabel," in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the "Lyrical Ballads" were published; and were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of style that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy, and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things which they were for a long time described as being; had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found, too, not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its religious fervour. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author,

which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface, in the sense attributed to them, and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but, on the contrary, objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface and to the author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth, in his recent collection, has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honoured more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare, once for all, in what points I coincide with his opinions, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible, I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my ideas, first, of a poem; and secondly, of poetry itself, in kind and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference, therefore, must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several months:

“Thirty days hath September,  
April, June, and November,” &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm superadded, whatever be their contents, *may* be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attainment of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the Bathyllus even of an Anacreon, or the Alexis of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having this object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the whole, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were sub-



joined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a legitimate poem, I answer, it must be one the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand to a series of striking lines or distichs, each of which absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, disjoins it from its context, and makes it a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. ✓  
Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air, at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Præcipitandus est liber spiritus*, says Petronius Arbiter most happily. The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb: and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Bishop Taylor, and the *Theoria Sacra* of Burnet, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradistinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah (indeed a very large proportion of the whole book) is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth, was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. Yet if a harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement as will partake of

cne, though not a peculiar, property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in the preceding disquisition on the fancy and imagination. What is poetry? is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind. The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control (*laxis effertur habenis*) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. "Doubtless," as Sir John Davies observes of the soul (and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic imagination),—

"Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns  
Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,  
As fire converts to fire the things it burns,  
As we our food into our nature change.

From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,  
And draws a kind of quintessence from things;  
Which to her proper nature she transforms  
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

Thus does she, when from individual states  
She doth abstract the universal kinds;  
Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates  
Steal access through our senses to our minds."

Finally, good sense is the body of poetic genius, fancy its drapery, motion its life, and imagination the soul that is every where, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

## CHAPTER XV.

The specific symptoms of poetic power elucidated in a critical analysis of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and *Rape of Lucrece*.

IN the application of these principles to purposes of practical criticism as employed in the appraisal of works more or less imperfect, I have endeavoured to discover what the qualities in a poem are, which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power, as distinguished from general talent determined to poetic composition by accidental motives, by an act of the will, rather than by the inspiration of a genial and productive nature. In this investigation, I could not, I thought, do better, than keep before me the earliest work of the greatest genius, that perhaps human nature has yet produced, our *myriad-minded*,\* Shakespeare. I mean the "*Venus and Adonis*," and the "*Lucrece*;" works which give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity, of his genius. From these I abstracted the following marks, as characteristics of original poetic genius in general.

1. In the "*Venus and Adonis*," the first and most obvious excellence is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man. "The man that hath not music in his soul" can indeed never be a genuine poet. Imagery (even taken from nature, much more when transplanted from books, as travels, voyages, and works of natural history); affecting incidents; just thoughts; interesting personal or do-

\* *Ἄριστο μυσόφρονος*, a phrase which I have borrowed from a Greek monk, who applies it to a Patriarch of Constantinople. I might have said, that I have reclaimed, rather than

borrowed it: for it seems to belong to Shakespeare *de jure singulari, et ex privilegio natura*.

ness feelings; and with these the art of their combination or intertexture in the form of a poem; may all by incessant effort be acquired as a trade, by a man of talents and much reading, who, as I once before observed, has mistaken an intense desire of poetic reputation for a natural poetic genius; the love of the arbitrary end for a possession of the peculiar means. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this, together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learnt. It is in these that "*Poeta nascitur non fit.*"

2. A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself. At least I have found, that where the subject is taken immediately from the author's personal sensations and experiences, the excellence of a particular poem is but an equivocal mark, and often a fallacious pledge, of genuine poetic power. We may perhaps remember the tale of the statuary, who had acquired considerable reputation for the legs of his goddesses, though the rest of the statue accorded but indifferently with ideal beauty; till his wife, elated by her husband's praises, modestly acknowledged that she herself had been his constant model. In the Venus and Adonis, this proof of poetic power exists even to excess. It is throughout as if a superior spirit, more intuitive, more intimately conscious even than the characters themselves, not only of every outward look and act, but of the flux and reflux of the mind in all its subtlest thoughts and feelings, were placing the whole before our view; himself meanwhile unparticipating in the passions, and actuated only by that pleasurable excitement which had resulted from the energetic fervour of his own spirit, in so vividly exhibiting what it had so accurately and profoundly contemplated. I think I should have conjectured from these poems, that even then the great instinct which impelled the poet to the drama was secretly working in him, prompting him by a series and never-broken chain of imagery, always vivid, and because unbroken, often minute; by the highest effort of the picturesque in words, of which words are capable, higher perhaps than was ever realized by any other poet, even Dante not excepted; to provide a substitute for that visual language, that constant intervention and running comment by tone, look, and gesture, which, in his dramatic works, he was entitled to expect from the players. His Venus and Adonis seem at once the

characters themselves, and the whole representation of those characters by the most consummate actors. You seem to be told) nothing, but to see and hear everything. Hence it is, that from the perpetual activity of attention required on the part of the reader; from the rapid flow, the quick change, and the playful nature of the thoughts and images; and, above all, from the alienation, and, if I may hazard such an expression, the utter aloofness of the poet's own feelings from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst; that though the very subject cannot but detract from the pleasure of a delicate mind, yet never was poem less dangerous on a moral account. Instead of doing as Ariosto, and as, still more offensively, Wieland has done; instead of degrading and deforming passion into appetite, the trials of love into the struggles of concupiscence, Shakespeare has here represented the animal impulse itself, so as to preclude all sympathy with it, by dissipating the reader's notice among the thousand outward images, and now beautiful, now fanciful circumstances, which form its dresses and its scenery; or by diverting our attention from the main subject by those frequent witty or profound reflections which the poet's ever active mind has deduced from, or connected with, the imagery and the incidents. The reader is forced into too much action to sympathise with the merely passive of our nature. As little can a mind thus roused and awakened be brooded on by mean and instinct emotion, as the low, lazy mist can creep upon the surface of a lake while a strong gale is driving it onward in waves and billows.

3. It has been before observed that images, however beautiful, though faithfully copied from nature, and as accurately represented in words, do not of themselves characterize the poet. They become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit,

"Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air."

In the two following lines, for instance, there is nothing objectionable, nothing which would preclude them from forming, in their proper place, part of a descriptive poem:

"Behold yon row of pines, that shorn and bow'd  
Bend from the sea-blast, seen at twilight eve."

But with the small alteration of rhythm, the same words would

be equally in their place in a book of topography, or in a descriptive tour. The same image will rise into a semblance of poetry if thus conveyed :

"Yon row of bleak and visionary pines,  
By twilight-glimpse discerned, mark ! how they flee  
From the fierce sea-blast, all their tresses wild  
Streaming before them."

I have given this as an illustration, by no means as an instance, of that particular excellence which I had in view, and in which Shakespeare, even in his earliest as in his latest works, surpasses all other poets. It is by this that he still gives a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents. Unaided by any previous excitement, they burst upon us at once in life and in power.

"Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye."  
Shakespeare's 33rd. Sonnet.

"Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come—

\* \* \* \* \*

The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,  
And the sad augurs mock their own presage:  
Incertainties now crown themselves assured,  
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.  
Now with the drops of this most balmy time  
My love looks fresh : and Death to me subscribes,  
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,  
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.  
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,  
When tyrants' crests, and tombs of brass are spent."

Sonnet 107.

As of higher worth, so doubtless still more characteristic of poetic genius does the imagery become, when it moulds and colours itself to the circumstances, passion, or character, present and foremost in the mind. For unrivalled instances of this excellence, the reader's own memory will refer him to the *Lear*, *Othello*, in short to which not of the "*great, ever living, dead man's*" dramatic works? *Inopem me copia fecit*. How true it is to nature, he has himself finely expressed in the instance of love in Sonnet 98:

"From you have I been absent in the spring,  
When proud-pied April drest in all his trim  
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing ;  
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.  
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell  
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,  
Could make me any summer's story tell,  
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew :

Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,  
Nor praise the deep vermillion in the rose;  
They were, but sweet, but figures of delight,  
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.  
Yet seem'd it winter still, and you away,  
*As with your shadow I with these did play!"*

Scarcely less sure, or if a less valuable, not less indispensable mark

Γόνιμον μὲν Ποιητοῦ —————  
— ὅστις ῥῆμα γενναῖον λάκοι,

will the imagery supply, when, with more than the power of the painter, the poet gives us the liveliest image of succession with the feeling of simultaneousness!

"With this he breaketh from the sweet embrace  
Of those fair arms, that bound him to her breast,  
And homeward through the dark laund runs apace:  
*Look how a bright star shooteth from the sky!*  
*So glides he in the night from Venus' eye."*

Venus and Adonis, l. 811.

4. The last character I shall mention, which would prove indeed but little, except as taken conjointly with the former; yet without which the former could scarce exist in a high degree, and (even if this were possible) would give promises only of transitory flashes and a meteoric power;—is depth and energy of thought. No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrantcy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language. In Shakespeare's Poems, the creative power and the intellectual energy wrestle as in a war embrace. Each in its excess of strength seems to threaten the extinction of the other. At length, in the drama they were reconciled, and fought each with its shield before the breast of the other. Or like two rapid streams that, at their first meeting within narrow and rocky banks, mutually strive to repel each other, and intermix reluctantly and in tumult, but, soon finding a wider channel and more yielding shores, blend and dilate, and flow on in one current and with one voice. The Venus and Adonis did not perhaps allow the display of the deeper passions. But the story of Lucretia seems to favour, and even demand, their intensest workings. And yet we find in Shakespeare's management of the tale neither pathos nor any other dramatic quality. There is the same minute and faithful imagery as in the former poem, in the same vivid colours, inspirited by the same impetuous vigour of thought, and diverging and contracting with the same activity of the assimilative and of the modifying faculties; and with a yet larger

display, a yet wider range of knowledge and reflection; and lastly, with the same perfect dominion, often domination, over the whole world of language. What, then, shall we say? even this, that Shakespeare, no mere child of nature; no automaton of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings, and at length gave birth to that stupendous power, by which he stands alone, with no equal or second in his own class; to that power which seated him on one of the two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain, with Milton as his compeer, not rival. While the former darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion, the one Proteus of the fire and the flood; the other attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own ideal. All things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of Milton; while Shakespeare becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself. O what great men hast thou not produced, England! my country! Truly, indeed,

“Must we be free or die, who speak the tongue,  
Which Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold,  
Which Milton held. In every thing we are sprung  
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold?”

WORDSWORTH.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

Striking points of difference between the Poets of the present age and those of the 15th and 16th centuries—Wish expressed for the union of the characteristic merits of both.

CHRISTENDOM, from its first settlement on feudal rights, has been so far one great body, however imperfectly organized, that a similar spirit will be found in each period to have been acting in all its members. The study of Shakespeare's Poems (I do not include his dramatic works, eminently as they too deserve that title) led me to a more careful examination of the contemporary poets both in this and in other countries. But my attention was especially fixed on those of Italy, from the birth to the death of Shakespeare; that being the country in which the fine arts had been most sedulously, and hitherto most successfully, cultivated. Abstracted from the degrees and peculiarities of individual genius, the properties common to the good writers of each period seem to establish one striking point of difference between the poetry of



the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and that of the present age. The remark may perhaps be extended to the sister art of painting. At least the latter will serve to illustrate the former. In the present age the poet (I would wish to be understood as speaking generally, and without allusion to individual names) seems to propose to himself as his main object, and as that which is the most characteristic of his art, new and striking images; with incidents that interest the affections or excite the curiosity. Both his characters and his descriptions he renders, as much as possible, specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture. In his diction and metre, on the other hand, he is comparatively careless. The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose. And the language from Pope's translation of Homer, to Darwin's "Temple of Nature," may, notwithstanding some illustrious exceptions, be too faithfully characterized as claiming to be poetical for no better reason than that it would be intolerable in conversation or in prose. Though, alas! even our prose writings, nay, even the style of our more set discourses, strive to be in the fashion, and trick themselves out in the soiled and over-worn finery of the meretricious muse. It is true, that of late a great improvement in this respect is observable in our most popular writers. But it is equally true, that this recurrence to plain sense and genuine mother English is far from being general; and that the composition of our novels, magazines, public harangues, &c., is commonly as trivial in thought, and yet enigmatic in expression, as if Echo and Sphinx had laid their heads together to construct it. Nay, even of those who have most rescued themselves from this contagion, I should plead inwardly guilty to the charge of duplicity or cowardice if I withheld my conviction, that few have guarded the purity of their native tongue with that jealous care, which the sublime Dante, in his tract, "*De la nobile volgare eloquenza*," declares to be the first duty of a poet. For language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests. "*Animadvertite, quam sit ab improprietate verborum primum hominibus prolabi in errores circa res!*"\* "*Sed vero, in hac vitæ brevitate*

\* HOBBS: *Examen. et Emend. hoc. Met.*

*et naturæ obscuritate, rerum est, quibus cognoscendis tempus impendatur, ut confusis et multivocis sermonibus intelligendis illud consumere non opus est. Eheu! quantas strages paravere verba nubila, quæ tot dicunt, ut nihil dicunt—nubes potius, e quibus et in rebus politicis et in ecclesiâ turbines et tonitrua erumpunt! Et proinde recte dictum putamus a Platone in Gorgiâ: ὅς ἂν τὰ ὀνόματα εἰδεῖ, εἴσεται καὶ τὰ πράγματα: et ab Epicteto, ἀρχὴ παιδείσεως ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπίσκεψις: et prudentissime Galenus scribit, ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων χρῆσις παραχθεῖσα καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιπαράττει γνῶσιν. Egrege vero J. C. Scaliger, in Lib. I. de Plantis: Est primum, inquit, sapientis officium, bene sentire, ut sibi vivat: proximum, bene loqui, ut patriæ vivat.\**

Something analogous to the materials and structure of modern poetry I seem to have noticed (but here I beg to be understood as speaking with the utmost diffidence) in our common landscape painters. Their foregrounds and intermediate distances are comparatively unattractive: while the main interest of the landscape is thrown into the back-ground, where mountains and torrents and castles forbid the eye to proceed, and nothing tempts it to trace its way back again. But in the works of the great Italian and Flemish masters, the front and middle objects of the landscape are the most obvious and determinate, the interest gradually dies away in the back-ground, and the charm and peculiar worth of the picture consists, not so much in the specific objects which it conveys to the understanding in a visual language formed by the substitution of figures for words, as in the beauty and harmony of the colours, lines and expression, with which the objects are represented. Hence novelty of subject was rather avoided than sought for. Superior excellence in the manner of treating the same subjects was the trial and test of the artist's merit.

Not otherwise is it with the more polished poets of the 15th and 16th centuries, especially with those of Italy. The imagery is almost always general; sun, moon, flowers, breezes, murmuring streams, warbling songsters, delicious shades, lovely damsels cruel as fair, nymphs, naiads, and goddesses, are the materials which are common to all, and which each shaped and arranged according to his judgment or fancy, little solicitous to add or to particularise. If we make an honourable exception in favour of some English poets, the thoughts too are as little novel as the images; and the fable of their narrative poems, for the most part drawn from mythology, or sources of equal notoriety, derive their chief attractions from the manner of treating them, from im-

\* SENNEERTUS de Puls: Differentiâ.

passioned flow, or picturesque arrangement. In opposition to the present age, and perhaps in as faulty an extreme, they placed the essence of poetry in the art. The excellence at which they aimed consisted in the exquisite polish of the diction, combined with perfect simplicity. This, their prime object, they attained by the avoidance of every word which a gentleman would not use in dignified conversation, and of every word and phrase which none but a learned man would use; by the studied position of words and phrases, so that not only each part should be melodious in itself, but contribute to the harmony of the whole, each note referring and conducing to the melody of all the foregoing and following words of the same period or stanza; and, lastly, with equal labour, the greater because unbetraysed, by the variation and various harmonies of their metrical movement. Their measures, however, were not indebted for their variety to the introduction of new metres, such as have been attempted of late in the "Alonzo and Imogen," and others borrowed from the German, having in their very mechanism a specific overpowering tune, to which the generous reader humours his voice and emphasis, with more indulgence to the author than attention to the meaning or quantity of the words, but which, to an ear familiar with the numerous sounds of the Greek and Roman poets, has an effect not unlike that of galloping over a paved road in a German stage-waggon without springs. On the contrary, the elder bards, both of Italy and England, produced a far greater as well as more charming variety, by countless modifications and subtle balances of sound in the common metres of their country. A lasting and enviable reputation awaits that man of genius who should attempt and realise a union; who should recall the high finish, the appropriateness, the facility, the delicate proportion, and, above all, the perfusive and omnipresent grace which have preserved, as in a shrine of precious amber, the Sparrow of Catullus, the Swallow, the Grasshopper, and all the other little loves of Anacreon; and which, with bright though diminished glories, revisited the youth and early manhood of Christian Europe in the vales of Arno,\* and the

\* These thoughts were suggested to me during the perusal of the Madrigals of Giovambattista Strozzi published in Florence (nella Stamperia del Sermartelli) 1st May, 1593, by his sons Lorenzo and Filippo Strozzi, with a dedication to their deceased paternal uncle, *Signor Leone Strozzi, Generale delle battaglie di Santa Chiesa*. As I do not remember to have seen either the poems or their author mentioned in any English work, or to have found them in any of the common

collections of Italian poetry; and as the Little work is of rare occurrence; I will transcribe a few specimens. I have seldom met with compositions that possessed, to my feelings, more of that satisfying entireness, that complete adequateness of the manner to the matter which so charms us in Anacreon, joined with the tenderness, and more than the delicacy of Catullus. Trifles as they are, they were probably elaborated with great care; yet in the perusal we refer them to a spontaneous energy

groves of Isis and of Cam; and who with these should combine the keener interest, deeper pathos, manlier reflection, and the fresher and more various imagery which give a value and a name that

rather than to voluntary effort. To a cultivated taste there is a delight in perfection for its own sake, independent of the material in which it is manifested, that none but a cultivated taste can understand or appreciate.

After what I have advanced, it would appear presumption to offer a translation; even if the attempt were not discouraged by the different genius of the English mind and language, which demands a denser body of thought as the condition of a high polish, than the Italian. I cannot but deem it likewise an advantage in the Italian tongue, in many other respects inferior to our own, that the language of poetry is more distinct from that of prose than with us. From the earlier appearance and established primacy of the Tuscan poets, concurring with the number of independent states, and the diversity of written dialects, the Italians have gained a poetic idiom, as the Greeks before them had obtained from the same causes, with greater and more various discriminations—ex. gr. the Ionic for their heroic verses; the attic for their iambic; and the two modes of the doric, the lyric or sacerdotal, and the pastoral, the distinctions of which were doubtless more obvious to the Greeks themselves than they are to us.

I will venture to add one other observation before I proceed to the transcription. I am aware that the sentiments which I have avowed concerning the points of difference between the poetry of the present age, and that of the period between 1500 and 1650 are the reverse of the opinion commonly entertained. I was conversing on this subject with a friend, when the servant, a worthy and sensible woman, coming in, I placed before her two engravings, the one a pinky-coloured plate of the day, the other a masterly etching by Salvator Rosa, from one of his own pictures. On pressing her to tell us which she preferred, after a little blushing and flutter of feeling, she replied—"why, that, Sir! to be sure! (pointing to the ware from the Fleet-street print shops). It's so neat and elegant. T'other is such a scratchy slovenly thing." An artist, whose writings are scarcely less valuable than his works, and to whose authority more deference will be willingly paid, than I could even wish should be shown to mine, has told us, and from his own experience too, that good taste must be acquired, and like all other good things, is the result of thought, and the submissive study of the best models. If it be asked, "But what shall I deem such?" the answer is: "Presume these to be the best, the reputation of which has been matured into fame by the consent of ages. For wisdom always has a final majority, if not by conviction, yet by acquies-

cence." In addition to Sir J. Reynolds I may mention Harris of Salisbury, who in one of his philosophical disquisitions has written on the means of acquiring a just taste with the precision of Aristotle, and the elegance of Quintillian.

#### MADRIGALE.

*Gelido suo ruscel chiaro, e tranquillo  
M'insegnò Amor, di state a mezzo'l giorno:  
Ardean le selve, ardean le piagge, e i colli.  
Ond'io, ch' al più gran gelo ardo e  
sfavillo,  
Subito corsi; ma sì puro adorno  
Girsene il vidi, che turbar no'l desio:  
Sol mi specchiava, e'n dolce ombrosa  
sponda  
Mi stava intento al mormorar dell' onda.*

#### MADRIGALE.

*Aure dell' angoscioso viver mio  
Refrigerio soave,  
E dolce sì, che più non mi par grave  
Ne'l arder, ne'l morir, ans' il desio;  
Deh vo'l ghiaccio, e le nubi, e'l tempo rio  
Disacciatene omai, che l'onda chiara,  
E l' ombra non men cara  
A scherzare, e cantar per suoi boschetti  
E prati Festa ed Allegrezza alletti.*

#### MADRIGALE.

*Pacifiche, ma spesso in amorosa  
Guerra co' fiori, e l' erba  
Alla stagione acerba  
Verde insegna del giglio e della rosa  
Movete, Aure, pian pian; che tregua o posa  
Se non pace, to ritrove:  
E so ben dove—Oh vago, et mansueto  
Sguardo, oh labbra d'ambrosia, oh rider  
lieto!*

#### MADRIGALE.

*Hor come un Scoglio stassi,  
Hor come un Rio se'n fugge,  
Ed hor crud' Orsa rugge,  
Hor canta Angelo pio: ma che non fassi?  
E che non fammi, O Sassi,  
O Rivi, o belue, o Dii, questa mia vaga  
Non so, se Ninfa, o Maga,  
Non so, se Donna, o Dea,  
Non so, se dolce ó rea?*

#### MADRIGALE.

*Piangendo mi baciaste,  
E ridendo il negasti:  
In doglia hebbivi pia,  
In festa hebbivi ria:  
Nacque Gioia di pranti,  
Dolor di riso: O amanti  
Miseri, habbate insieme  
Ognor Paura e Speme.*

will not pass away to the poets who have done honour to our own times, and to those of our immediate predecessors.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth—Rustic life (above all, low and rustic life) especially unfavourable to the formation of a human diction—The best parts of language the products of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds—Poetry essentially ideal and generic—The language of Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so, than that of the cottager.

AS far, then, as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction; as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the dramatic propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images, and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this

### MADRIGALE

*Bel Fior, tu mi rimembri  
La rugiadosa guancia del bel viso;  
E sì vera l'assembri,  
Che'n te sovente, come in lei m'affisso:  
Ed hor del vago riso,  
Hor dell sereno sguardo  
Io pur cieco riguarda. Ma qual fugge.  
O Rosa, il mattin lieve?  
E chi te, come neve,  
E'l mio cor teco, e la mia vita strugge?*

### MADRIGALE

*Anna mia, Anna dolce, oh sempre nuovo  
E più chiaro concento,  
Quanta dolcezza sento  
In sol Anna dicendo? Io mi pur pruovo,  
Ne quì tra noi ritruovo,  
Ne tra cieli armonia,  
Che del bel nome suo più dolce sia:  
Altro il Cielo, altro Amore.  
Altro non suona l'Ecco del mio core.*

### MADRIGALE

*Hor che'l prato, e la selva si scolora,  
Al tuo Sereno ombroso  
Muovine, alto Riposo!  
Deh ch'io riposi una sol notte, un hera!  
Han le fere, e gli augelli, ognun talora  
Ha qualche pace; io quando,  
Lasso! non volve errando,  
E non pianga, e non grido? e qual pur  
forte?  
Ma poichè non senti, egli odine, Morte!*

### MADRIGALE

*Risi e pianti d'Amor; ne però mai  
Se non in fiamma, o n'onda, o n'venez  
scrisi;  
Spesso mercè trovai  
Crudel; sempre in me morto, in altri  
vissi!  
Hor da' più scuri abissi al Ciel m'alsai.  
Hor ne pur caddi giuso:  
Stanco al fin qui son chiuso!*

preface. I cannot likewise but add that the comparison of such poems of merit as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident, and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feel himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner, with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read) been denied or doubted; and, lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which, it is practicable, it is yet, as a rule, useless, if not injurious, and, therefore, either need not or ought

not to be practised. The poet informs his reader that he had generally chosen low and rustic life, but not *as* low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in fact, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does indeed constitute it an imitation, as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority, awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained sometimes actual clowns and fools but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. He chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."

Now it is clear to me that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as *The Brothers*, *Michael*, *Ruth*, *The Mad Mother*, &c., the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common acceptance of those words; and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal, I rank that independence which raises a man above servitude or daily toil for the profit of others,

yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life, and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, education which has rendered few books familiar but the Bible and the liturgy or hymn-book. To this latter cause indeed, which is so far accidental that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's,\* that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible, will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned, the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing their style."

It is, moreover, to be considered, that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is pre-requisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labours. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants, and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol, be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience has not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the

\* *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus*, Sec. XXXV.



ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and centre. (I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulged in this preface.) I adopt with full faith the principle of Aristotle, that poetry as poetry is essentially ideal,\* that it avoids and excludes all accidents; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class; not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess. If my premises are right, and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of *The Brothers*, those of the Shepherd of Green-head Gill in *The Michael*, have all the verisimilitude and representative quality that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take *Michael* for instance :

" An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb :  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,  
Intense and frugal, apt for all affairs,

\* Say not that I am recommending abstractions, for these class-characteristics which constitute the instructiveness of a character are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shakespearian drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence; and Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth which is uppermost in the consciousness; in poetry the individual form in which truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of poetry. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely; much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, slang phrases for the day, or the clothing of

common-place morals in metaphors drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters. Nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them facsimiles of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to affect us indeed; but yet within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness, during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are," and of the peculiar state in which each man happens to be, suspending our individual recollections and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

THE FRIEND.

And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
 And watchful more than ordinary men.  
 Hence he had learnt the meaning of all winds,  
 Of blasts of every tone, and oftentimes  
 When others heeded not, he heard the South  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
 'The winds are now devising work for me.'  
 And truly at all times the storm, that drives  
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him  
 Up to the mountains. He had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
 That came to him and left him on the heights.  
 So lived he, till his eightieth year was passed.  
 And grossly that man erra, who should suppose  
 That the green vallies, and the streams and rocks,  
 Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.  
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed  
 The common air; the hills, which he so oft  
 Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
 Which like a book preserved the memory  
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,  
 So grateful in themselves, the certainty  
 Of honourable gain; these fields, these hills  
 Which were his living being, even more  
 Than his own blood—what could they less?—had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections,—were to him  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,—  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself."

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched at a lower note, as the *Harry Gill*, the *Idiot Boy*, &c., the feelings are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the scene in the country, in order to place himself in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In the *Idiot Boy*, indeed, the mother's character is not so much a real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless; at least, they are the only plausible objections which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordinary, morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He has even

by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so evenly balanced by the folly of the mother, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In *The Thorn*, the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men, having nothing to do, become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem (and the Nurse in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic poetry, if indeed the Nurse itself can be deemed altogether a case in point), it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser without repeating the effects of dulness and garrulity: However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts (and these form the far larger portion of the whole) which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza,\* the seven last lines of the tenth,† and the five

\* "I've measured it from side to side;  
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide."

† "Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,  
I'll tell you every thing I know;  
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond  
Which is a little step beyond,  
I wish that you would go:  
Perhaps, when you are at the place,  
You something of her tale may trace.  
I'll give you the best help I can:  
Before you up the mountain go,  
Up to the dreary mountain-top,  
I'll tell you all I know.  
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
And she was happy, happy still  
Where'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fixed the wedding-day,  
The morning that must wed them both;  
But Stephen to another maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And with this other maid to church  
Unthinking Stephen went—  
Poor Martha! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent;  
A fire was kindled in her breast,  
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
'Tis said, a child was in her womb,  
As now to any eye was plain;  
She was with child, and she was mad;  
Yet often she was sober sad  
From her exceeding pain.

following stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *à priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself *need* be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation, and which I can neither admit as particular fact, or as general rule. "The language too of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society, and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply, that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far re-constructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials), will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions which the rustic has to convey are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration (equally important though less obvious) that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connec-

Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather  
That he had died, that cruel father!

\* \* \* \* \*

Last Christmas when we talked of this,  
Old farmer Simpson did maintain,  
That in her womb the infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought  
Her senses back again:  
And when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

No more I know, I wish I did,  
And I would tell it all to you;  
For what became of this poor child  
There's none that ever knew:  
And if a child was born or no,  
There's no one that could ever tell:  
And if 'twas born alive or dead,  
There's no one knows, as I have said;  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb."

tions of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For, first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things, and modes of action, requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized; while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed or reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools, and at the commencement of the Reformation had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes in the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same

nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When therefore Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly such a language" (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism), "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical, language than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets, who think they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;" it may be answered, that the language which he has in view can be attributed to rustics with no greater right than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange. Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions which I controvert are contained in the sentences—"a selection of the real language of men;"—"the language of these men (i.e., men in low and rustic life) I propose to myself to imitate, and as far as possible to adopt the very language of men." "Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference." It is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke, differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one or the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composi-

tion differs from that of a common peasant. For "real," therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis*. And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each, and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay, in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the excise-man, publican, or barber, happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anterior to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists everywhere in parts, and nowhere as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, when he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions, and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create, but to set in increased activity.) At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce, yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the processions of Macbeth or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode

more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. "At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead."—JUDGES v. 27.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose  
—Origin and elements of metre—its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively as that class would use, or at least understand; but likewise by following the order in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power by the greater disjunction and *separation* in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that *surview*, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the Lyrical Ballads. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language:

"In distant countries I have been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads, alone.



But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad highway, I met;  
Along the broad highway he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet.  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad,  
And in his arms a lamb he had."

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life: and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage, than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the order in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," &c. &c. But when I turn to the following stanza in *The Thorn*:

"At all times of the day and night  
This wretched woman thither goes,  
And she is known to every star  
And every wind that blows:  
And there beside the thorn she sits,  
When the blue day-light's in the skies:  
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still;  
And to herself she cries,  
Oh misery! Oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! Oh misery!"

and compare this with the language of ordinary men, or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator as is supposed in the note to the poem—compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences—I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporaneous devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

"The Vision and the Faculty divine."

One point then alone remains, but that the most important; its examination having been, indeed, my chief inducement for the preceding inquisition. "There neither is or can be any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition." Such is Mr. Wordsworth's assertion. Now prose itself,

at least in all argumentative and consecutive works, differs, and ought to differ, from the language of conversation; even as reading ought to differ from talking.\* Unless, therefore, the difference denied be that of the mere words, as materials common to all styles of writing, and not of the style itself in the universally admitted sense of the term, it might be naturally presumed that there must exist a still greater between the ordonnance of poetic composition and that of prose, than is expected to distinguish prose from ordinary conversation.

There are not, indeed, examples wanting in the history of literature, of apparent paradoxes that have summoned the public wonder as new and startling truths, but which on examination have shrunk into tame and harmless truisms; as the eyes of a cat, seen in the dark, have been mistaken for flames of fire. But Mr. Wordsworth is among the last men to whom a delusion of this kind would be attributed by any one who had enjoyed the slightest opportunity of understanding his mind and character. Where an objection has been anticipated by such an author as natural, his answer to it must needs be interpreted in some sense which either is, or has been, or is capable of being controverted. My object, then, must be to discover some other meaning for the term "essential difference" in this place, exclusive of the indistinction and community of the words themselves. For whether there ought to exist a class of words in the English in any degree resembling the poetic dialect of the Greek and Italian, is a question of very subordinate importance. The number of such words would be small indeed in our language; and even in the Italian and Greek, they consist not so much of different words as of slight differences in the forms of declining and conjugating the

\* It is no less an error in teachers, than a torment to the poor children, to enforce the necessity of reading as they would talk. In order to cure them of singing, as it is called, that is, of too great a difference, the child is made to repeat the words with his eyes from off the book; and then, indeed, his tones resemble talking, as far as his fears, tears, and trembling will permit. But as soon as the eye is again directed to the printed page, the spell begins anew; for an instinctive sense tells the child's feelings, that to utter its own momentary thoughts, and to recite the written thoughts of another, as of another, and a far wiser than himself, are two widely different things; and as the two acts are accompanied with widely different feelings, so must they justify different modes of enunciation. Joseph Lancaster, among his other sophistications of the excellent Dr. Bell's invaluable system, cures this fault of singing, by hanging fetters

and chains on the child, to the music of which one of his school-fellows, who walks before, dolefully chants out the child's last speech and confession, birth, parentage, and education. And this soul-benumbing ignominy, this unholy and heart-hardening burlesque on the last fearful infliction of outraged law, in pronouncing the sentence to which the stern and familiarized judge not seldom bursts into tears, has been extolled as a happy and ingenious method of remedying—what? and how?—why, one extreme in order to introduce another, scarce less distant from good sense, and certainly likely to have worse moral effects, by enforcing a semblance of petulant ease and self-sufficiency, in repression, and possible after-perversion of the natural feelings. I have to beg Dr. Bell's pardon for this connection of the two names, but he knows that contrast is no less powerful a cause of association than likeness.

same words; forms, doubtless, which having been, at some period more or less remote, the common grammatic flexions of some tribe or province, had been accidentally appropriated to poetry by the general admiration of certain master intellects, the first established lights of inspiration, to whom that dialect happened to be native.

Essence, in its primary signification, means the principle of individuation, the inmost principle of the possibility of any thing, as that particular thing. It is equivalent to the idea of a thing, whenever we use the word idea with philosophic precision. Existence, on the other hand, is distinguished from essence by the superinduction of reality. Thus we speak of the essence and essential properties of a circle; but we do not therefore assert, that any thing which really exists is mathematically circular. Thus too, without any tautology, we contend for the existence of the Supreme Being; that is, for a reality correspondent to the idea. There is, next, a secondary use of the word essence, in which it signifies the point or ground of contradistinction between two modifications of the same substance or subject. Thus we should be allowed to say, that the style of architecture of Westminster Abbey is essentially different from that of Saint Paul's, even though both had been built with blocks cut into the same form, and from the same quarry. Only in this latter sense of the term must it have been denied by Mr. Wordsworth (for in this sense alone is it affirmed by the general opinion) that the language of poetry (i.e., the formal construction, or architecture, of the words and phrases) is essentially different from that of prose. Now the burthen of the proof lies with the oppugner, not with the supporters of the common belief. Mr. Wordsworth, in consequence, assigns as the proof of his position, "that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings even of Milton himself." He then quotes Gray's sonnet:

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;  
The birds in vain their amorous descant join  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire;  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;  
*A different object do these eyes require;*

*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,  
 And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;  
 Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men  
 The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,  
 To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
 I fruitless mourn to him who cannot hear,  
 And weep the more because I weep in vain ;"*

and adds the following remark : " It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in italics. It is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word 'fruitless' for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose."

An idealist defending his system by the fact, that when asleep we often believe ourselves awake, was well answered by his plain neighbour, "Ah! but when awake do we ever believe ourselves asleep?" Things identical must be convertible. The preceding passage seems to rest on a similar sophism. For the question is not, whether there may not occur in prose an order of words, which would be equally proper in a poem; nor whether there are not beautiful lines and sentences of frequent occurrence in good poems, which would be equally becoming as well as beautiful in good prose; for neither the one or the other has ever been either denied or doubted by any one. The true question must be, whether there are not modes of expression, a construction, and an order of sentences, which are in their fit and natural place in a serious prose composition, but would be disproportionate and heterogeneous in metrical poetry; and, *vice versâ*, whether in the language of a serious poem there may not be an arrangement both of words and sentences, and a use and selection of (what are called) figures of speech, both as to their kind, their frequency, and their occasions, which on a subject of equal weight would be vicious and alien in correct and manly prose. I contend, that in both cases this unfitness of each for the place of the other frequently will and ought to exist.

And, first, from the origin of metre. This I would trace to the balance in the mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion. It might be easily explained likewise in what manner this salutary antagonism is assisted by the very state which it counteracts; and how this balance of antagonists became organized into metre (in the usual acceptation of that term) by a supervening act of the will and judgment, consciously and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure.

Assuming these principles as the data of our argument, we deduce from them two legitimate conditions, which the critic is entitled to expect in every metrical work. First, that as the elements of metre owe their existence to a state of increased excitement, so the metre itself should be accompanied by the natural language of excitement. Secondly, that as these elements are formed into metre artificially, by a voluntary act, with the design and for the purpose of blending delight with emotion, so the traces of present volition should throughout the metrical language be proportionally discernible. Now these two conditions must be reconciled and co-present. There must be not only a partnership, but a union; an interpenetration of passion and of will, of spontaneous impulse and of voluntary purpose. Again, this union can be manifested only in a frequency of forms and figures of speech (originally the offspring of passion, but now the adopted children of power) greater than would be desired or endured, where the emotion is not voluntarily encouraged, and kept up for the sake of that pleasure, which such emotion so tempered and mastered by the will is found capable of communicating. It not only dictates, but of itself tends to produce, a more frequent employment of picturesque and vivifying language than would be natural in any other case in which there did not exist, as there does in the present, a previous and well understood, though tacit, compact between the poet and his reader, that the latter is entitled to expect, and the former bound to supply, this species and degree of pleasurable excitement. We may in some measure apply to this union the answer of Polixenes, in the *Winter's Tale*, to Perdita's neglect of the streaked gilly-flowers, because she had heard it said:

" There is an art which in their pinedness shares  
With great creating nature.  
Pol. Say there be.  
Yet nature is made better by no mean,  
But nature makes that mean. So over that art,  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes! You see, sweet maid, we marry  
*A gentler scion to the wildest stock:*  
And make conceive a bark of baser kind  
By bud of nobler race. This is an art,  
Which does mend nature—change it rather; but  
The art itself is nature."

Secondly, I argue from the effects of metre. As far as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprise, and by

the quick reciprocations of curiosity still gratified and still re-excited, which are too slight indeed to be at any one moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence. As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine during animated conversation, they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed. Where, therefore, correspondent food and appropriate matter are not provided for the attention and feelings thus roused, there must needs be a disappointment felt; like that of leaping in the dark from the last step of a staircase, when we had prepared our muscles for a leap of three or four.

The discussion on the powers of metre in the preface is highly ingenious, and touches at all points on truth. But I cannot find any statement of its powers considered abstractly and separately. On the contrary, Mr. Wordsworth seems always to estimate metre by the powers which it exerts during (and, as I think, in consequence of) its combination with other elements of poetry. Thus the previous difficulty is left unanswered, what the elements are with which it must be combined in order to produce its own effects to any pleasurable purpose. Double and trisyllable rhymes, indeed, form a lower species of wit, and, attended to exclusively for their own sake, may become a source of momentary amusement; as in poor Smart's distich to the Welch Squire who had promised him a hare:

"Tell me, thou son of great Cadwallader!  
Hast sent the hare? or hast thou swallow'd her?"

But for any poetic purposes, metre resembles (if the aptness of the simile may excuse its meanness) yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vivacity and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionally combined.

The reference to the Children in the Wood by no means satisfies my judgment. We all willingly throw ourselves back for awhile into the feelings of our childhood. This ballad, therefore, we read under such recollections of our own childish feelings, as would equally endear to us poems which Mr. Wordsworth himself would regard as faulty in the opposite extreme of gaudy and technical ornament. Before the invention of printing and, in a still greater degree, before the introduction of writing, metre, especially alliterative metre (whether alliterative at the beginning of the words, as in *Pierre Plouman*, or at the end as in rhymes), possessed an independent value as assisting the recollection, and consequently the preservation, of any series of truths or incidents. But I am not convinced by the collation of facts that the

Children in the Wood owes either its preservation or its popularity to its metrical form. Mr. Marshall's repository affords a number of tales in prose inferior in pathos and general merit some of as old a date, and many as widely popular. Tom Hickathrift, Jack the Giant Killer, Goody Two Shoes, and Little Red Riding Hood, are formidable rivals. And that they have continued in prose cannot be fairly explained by the assumption that the comparative meanness of their thoughts and images precluded even the humblest forms of metre. The scene of Goody Two Shoes in the church is perfectly susceptible of metrical narration; and among the *Θαύματα Σαυματοτόρατα* even of the present age, I do not recollect a more astonishing image than that of the "whole rookery, that flew out of the giant's beard," scared by the tremendous voice with which this monster answered the challenge of the heroic Tom Hickathrift!

If from these we turn to compositions universally, and independently of all early associations, beloved and admired, would the *Maria*, the *Monk*, or the *Poor Man's Ass* of Sterne, be read with more delight, or have a better chance of immortality, had they, without any change in the diction, been composed in rhyme, than in their present state? If I am not grossly mistaken, the general reply would be in the negative. Nay, I will confess, that in Mr. Wordsworth's own volumes, the *Anecdote for Fathers*, *Simon Lee*, *Alice Fell*, the *Beggars*, and the *Sailor's Mother*, notwithstanding the beauties which are to be found in each of them where the poet interposes the music of his own thoughts, would have been more delightful to me in prose, told and managed, as by Mr. Wordsworth they would have been in a moral essay or pedestrian tour.

Metre in itself is simply a stimulant of the attention, and therefore excites the question, Why is the attention to be thus stimulated? Now the question cannot be answered by the pleasure of the metre itself: for this we have shown to be conditional, and dependent on the appropriateness of the thoughts and expressions to which the metrical form is superadded. Neither can I conceive any other answer that can be rationally given, short of this: I write in metre, because I am about to use a language different from that of prose. Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting soever the reflections are that are capable of being drawn by a philosophic mind from the thoughts or incidents of the poem, the metre itself must often become feeble. Take the three last stanzas of the *Sailor's Mother*, for instance. If I could for a moment abstract from the effect produced on the author's feelings

as a man, by the incident at the time of its real occurrence, I would dare appeal to his own judgment, whether in the metre itself he found sufficient reason for their being written metrically?

"And thus continuing, she said  
I had a son, who many a day  
Sailed on the seas; but he is dead;  
In Denmark he was cast away:  
And I have travelled far as Hull, to see  
What clothes he might have left, or other property.

The bird and cage, they both were his;  
'Twas my son's bird; and neat and trim  
He kept it: many voyages  
This singing bird hath gone with him;  
When last he sailed he left the bird behind;  
As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care  
Had left it, to be watched and fed,  
Till he came back again; and there  
I found it when my son was dead;  
And now, God help me for my little wit!  
I trail it with me, Sir! he took so much delight in it."

If disproportioning the emphasis we read these stanzas so as to make the rhymes perceptible, even trisyllable rhymes could scarcely produce an equal sense of oddity and strangeness, as we feel here in finding rhymes at all in sentences so exclusively colloquial. I would further ask whether, but for that visionary state into which the figure of the woman and the susceptibility of his own genius had placed the poet's imagination (a state which spreads its influence and colouring over all, that co-exists with the exciting cause, and in which

"The simplest, and the most familiar things  
Gain a strange power of spreading awe around them"—

I would ask the poet whether he would not have felt an abrupt down-fall in these verses from the preceding stanza?

"The ancient spirit is not dead;  
Old times, thought I, are breathing there!  
Proud was I, that my country bred  
Such strength, a dignity so fair!  
She begged an alma, like one in poor estate;  
I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate."

\* Altered from the description of Night-Mair in the Remorse.

"Oh Heaven! 'twas frightful! Now run  
down and stared at,  
By hideous shapes that cannot be remem-  
bered:

Now seeing nothing and imagining nothing;  
But only being afraid—stified with fear!

While every goodly or familiar form  
Had a strange power of spreading terror  
round me."

N.B. Though Shakespeare has for his own all-justifying purposes introduced the Night-Mare with her own foals, yet Mair means a Sister, or perhaps a Hag.



It must not be omitted, and is besides worthy of notice, that those stanzas furnish the only fair instance that I have been able to discover in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings of an actual adoption, or true imitation, of the real and very language of low and rustic life, freed from provincialisms.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre. Metre therefore having been connected with poetry most often and by a peculiar fitness, whatever else is combined with metre must, though it be not itself essentially poetic, have nevertheless some property in common with poetry, as an intermedium of affinity, a sort (if I may dare borrow a well-known phrase from technical chemistry) of *mordant* between it and the superadded metre. Now poetry, Mr. Wordsworth truly affirms, does always imply passion: which word must be here understood, in its most general sense, as an excited state of the feelings and faculties. And as every passion has its proper pulse, so will it likewise have its characteristic modes of expression. But where there exists that degree of genius and talent which entitles a writer to aim at the honours of a poet, the very act of poetic composition itself is, and is allowed to imply and to produce, an unusual state of excitement, which of course justifies and demands a correspondent difference of language, as truly, though not perhaps in as marked a degree, as the excitement of love, fear, rage, or jealousy. The vividness of the descriptions or declamations in Donne, or Dryden, is as much and as often derived from the force and fervour of the describer, as from the reflections, forms, or incidents which constitute their subject and materials. The wheels take fire from the mere rapidity of their motion. To what extent, and under what modifications, this may be admitted to act, I shall attempt to define in an after remark on Mr. Wordsworth's reply to this objection, or rather on his objection to this reply, as already anticipated in his preface.

Fourthly, and as intimately connected with this, if not the same argument in a more general form, I adduce the high spiritual instinct of the human being impelling us to seek unity by harmonious adjustment, and thus establishing the principle, that all the parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more important and essential parts. This and the preceding arguments may be strengthened by the reflection, that the composition of a poem is among the imitative arts; and that imitation, as opposed to copying, consists either in the interfusion of the same through

out the radically different, or of the different throughout a base radically the same.

Lastly, I appeal to the practice of the best poets, of all countries and in all ages, as authorizing the opinion (deduced from all the foregoing) that in every import of the word essential, which would not here involve a mere truism, there may be, is, and ought to be, an essential difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition.

In Mr. Wordsworth's criticism of Gray's Sonnet, the reader's sympathy with his praise or blame of the different parts is taken for granted rather perhaps too easily. He has not, at least, attempted to win or compel it by argumentative analysis. In my conception at least, the lines rejected as of no value do, with the exception of the two first, differ as much and as little from the language of common life, as those which he has printed in italics as possessing genuine excellence. Of the five lines thus honourably distinguished, two of them differ from prose even more widely than the lines which either precede or follow, in the position of the words:

*"A different object do these eyes require;  
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;  
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire."*

But were it otherwise, what would this prove but a truth of which no man ever doubted?—videlicet, that there are sentences, which would be equally in their place both in verse and prose. Assuredly it does not prove the point which alone requires proof; namely, that there are not passages, which would suit the one and not suit the other. The first line of this sonnet is distinguished from the ordinary language of men by the epithet to morning. (For we will set aside, at present, the consideration, that the particular word "smiling" is hacknied, and—as it involves a sort of personification—not quite congruous with the common and material attribute of shining.) And, doubtless, this adjunction of epithets for the purpose of additional description, where no particular attention is demanded for the quality of the thing, would be noticed as giving a poetic cast to a man's conversation. Should the sportsman exclaim, "Come boys! the rosy morning calls you up," he will be supposed to have some song in his head. But no one suspects this when he says, "A wet morning shall not confine us to our beds." This then is either a defect in poetry, or it is not. Whoever should decide in the affirmative, I would request him to re-peruse any one poem of any confessedly great poet from Homer to Milton, or from Æschylus to Shake-

spare; and to strike out (in thought I mean) every instance of this kind. If the number of these fancied erasures did not startle him, or if he continued to deem the work improved by their total omission, he must advance reasons of no ordinary strength and evidence, reasons grounded in the essence of human nature. Otherwise I should not hesitate to consider him as a man not so much proof against all authority as dead to it.

The second line,

"And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire,"

has indeed almost as many faults as words. But then it is a bad line, not because the language is distinct from that of prose, but because it conveys incongruous images, because it confounds the cause and the effect, the real thing with the personified representative of the thing; in short, because it differs from the language of good sense. That the "Phœbus" is hacknied, and a school-boy image, is an accidental fault, dependent on the age in which the author wrote, and not deduced from the nature of the thing. That it is part of an exploded mythology, is an objection more deeply grounded. Yet when the torch of ancient learning was rekindled, so cheering were its beams, that our eldest poets, cut off by Christianity from all accredited machinery, and deprived of all acknowledged guardians and symbols of the great objects of nature, were naturally induced to adopt, as a poetic language, those fabulous personages, those forms of the supernatural in nature,\* which had given them such dear delight in the poems of their great masters. Nay, even at this day what scholar of genial taste will not so far sympathize with them, as to read with pleasure in Petrarch, Chaucer, or Spenser, what he would perhaps condemn as puerile in a modern poet?

I remember no poet, whose writings would safelier stand the test of Mr. Wordsworth's theory, than Spenser. Yet will Mr. Wordsworth say, that the style of the following stanzas is either undistinguished from prose, and the language of ordinary life? Or that it is vicious, and that the stanzas are blots in the *Faëry Queen*?

"By this the northern waggoner had set  
His sevenfold teme behind the steadfast starre,  
That was in ocean waves yet never wet,  
But firme is fixt and sendeth light from farre  
To all that in the wild deep wandering arre.

\* But still more by the mechanical system of philosophy which has needlessly infected our theological opinions, and teaching us to consider the world in its relation to God, as of

a building to its mason, leaves the idea of omnipresence a mere abstract notion in the state-room of our reason.

And chearfull chaunticleer with his note shrill  
 Had warn'd once that Phoebus' fiery carre  
 In hast was climbing up the easterne hill,  
 Full envious that night so long his roome did fill."

*Book I. Can. 2, St. 1.*

"At last the golden orientall gate  
 Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,  
 And Phoebus fresh as brydegrome to his mate,  
 Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawle hayre,  
 And hurl'd his glist'ring beams through gloomy syre;  
 Which when the wakeful elfe perceived, streightway  
 He started up, and did him selfe prepayre  
 In sun-bright armes, and battallous array;  
 For with that pagan proud he combat will that day."

*Book I. Can. 5, St. 2.*

On the contrary, to how many passages, both in hymn books and in blank verse poems, could I (were it not invidious) direct the reader's attention, the style of which is most unpoetic, because, and only because, it is the style of prose? He will not suppose me capable of having in my mind such verses as

"I put my hat upon my head  
 And walked into the Strand;  
 And there I met another man,  
 Whose hat was in his hand."

To such specimens it would indeed be a fair and full reply, that these lines are not bad because they are unpoetic, but because they are empty of all sense and feeling; and that it were an idle attempt to prove that "an ape is not a Newton, when it is evident that he is not a man." But the sense shall be good and weighty, the language correct and dignified, the subject interesting and treated with feeling; and yet the style shall, notwithstanding all these merits, be justly blameable as prosaic, and solely because the words and the order of the words would find their appropriate place in prose, but are not suitable to metrical composition. The *Civil Wars of Daniel* is an instructive, and even interesting work: but take the following stanzas (and from the hundred instances which abound I might probably have selected others far more striking):

"And to the end we may with better ease  
 Discern the true discourse, vouchsafe to shew  
 What were the times foregoing near to these,  
 That these we may with better profit know.  
 Tell how the world fell into this disease;  
 And how so great distemperature did grow;  
 So shall we see with what degrees it came;  
 How things at full do soon wax out of frame."

"Ten kings had from the Norman conqueror reign'd  
With intermixt and variable fate,  
When England to her greatest height attain'd  
Of power, dominion, glory, wealth, and state;  
After it had with much ado sustain'd  
The violence of princes with debate  
For titles, and the often mutinies  
Of nobles for their ancient liberties."

"For first the Norman, conqueror all by might,  
By might was forced to keep what he had got;  
Mixing our customs and the form of right  
With foreign constitutions, he had brought;  
Mastering the mighty, humbling the poorer wight,  
By all severest means that could be wrought;  
And making the succession doubtful, rent  
His new-got state and left it turbulent."

Book I. St. 7, 8, 9.

Will it be contended, on the one side, that these lines are mean and senseless? Or on the other, that they are not prosaic, and for that reason unpoetic? This poet's well-merited epithet is that of the "well-linguaged Daniel;" but likewise and by the consent of his contemporaries no less than of all succeeding critics, the "prosaic Daniel." Yet those, who thus designate this wise and amiable writer from the frequent incorrespondency of his diction to his metre in the majority of his compositions, not only deem them valuable and interesting on other accounts, but willingly admit that there are to be found throughout his poems, and especially in his Epistles and in his Hymen's Triumph, many and exquisite specimens of that style which, as the neutral ground of prose and verse, is common to both. A fine and almost faultless extract, eminent as for other beauties so for its perfection in this species of diction, may be seen in Lamb's Dramatic Specimens, &c., a work of various interest from the nature of the selections themselves (all from the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries), and deriving a high additional value from the notes, which are full of just and original criticism, expressed with all the freshness of originality.

Among the possible effects of practical adherence to a theory that aims to identify the style of prose and verse (if it does not indeed claim for the latter a yet nearer resemblance to the average style of men in the *viâ vocis* intercourse of real life) we might anticipate the following as not the least likely to occur. It will happen, as I have indeed before observed, that the metre itself, the sole acknowledged difference, will occasionally become metre to the eye only. The existence of prosaisms, and that they detract from the merits of a poem, must at length be conceded, when a

number of successive lines can be rendered, even to the most delicate ear, unrecognizable as verse, or as having even been intended for verse, by simply transcribing them as prose: when if the poem be in blank verse, this can be effected without any alteration, or at most by merely restoring one or two words to their proper places, from which they had been transplanted \* for no assignable cause or reason but that of the author's convenience; but if it be in rhyme, by the mere exchange of the final word of each line for some other of the same meaning, equally appropriate, dignified and euphonic.

The answer or objection in the preface to the anticipated remark "that metre paves the way to other distinctions," is contained in the following words:—"The distinction of rhyme and metre is voluntary and uniform, and not like that produced by (what is called) poetic diction, arbitrary and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case the reader is utterly at the mercy of the poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion." But is this a poet, of whom a poet is speaking? No, surely—rather of a fool or madman, or at best of a vain or ignorant phantast! And might not brains so wild and so deficient make just the same havoc with rhymes and metres as they are supposed to effect with modes and figures of speech? How is the reader at the mercy of such men? If he continue to read their nonsense, is it not his own fault? The ultimate end of criticism is much more to establish the principles of writing than to furnish rules how to pass judgment on what has been written by others; if indeed it

\* As the ingenious gentleman under the influence of the Tragic Muse contrived to dislocate, "I wish you a good morning, Sir! Thank you, Sir, and I wish you the same," into two blank-verse heroics:

To you a morning good, good Sir! I wish,  
You, Sir! I thank: to you the same wish I.

In those parts of Mr. Wordsworth's works which I have thoroughly studied, I find fewer instances in which this would be practicable than I have met in many poems, where an approximation of prose has been sedulously and on system guarded against. Indeed, excepting the stanzas already quoted from the Sailor's Mother, I can recollect but one instance: viz. a short passage of four or five lines in the Brothers, that model of English pastoral, which I never yet read with unclouded eye. "James, pointing to its summit, over which they had all purposed to return together, informed them that he would wait for them there. They parted, and his comrades passed that way some two hours

after, but they did not find him at the appointed place, a circumstance of which they took no heed: but one of them going by chance into the house, which at this time was James's house, learnt there that nobody had seen him all that day." The only change which has been made is in the position of the little word "there" in two instances, the position in the original being clearly such as is not adopted in ordinary conversation. The other words printed in italics were so marked because, though good and genuine English, they are not the phraseology of common conversation either in the word put in apposition, or in the connection by the genitive pronoun. Men in general would have said, "but that was a circumstance they paid no attention to, or took no notice of," and the language is, on the theory of the preface, justified only by the narrator's being the Vicar. Yet if any ear could suspect that these sentences were ever printed as metre, on those very words alone could the suspicion have been grounded.

were possible that the two could be separated. But if it be asked, by what principles the poet is to regulate his own style, if he do not adhere closely to the sort and order of words which he hears in the market, wake, high-road, or plough-field? I reply, by principles, the ignorance or neglect of which would convict him of being no poet, but a silly or presumptuous usurper of the name! By the principles of grammar, logic, psychology! In one word, by such a knowledge of the facts, material and spiritual, that most appertain to his art, as, if it have been governed and applied by good sense, and rendered instinctive by habit, becomes the representative and reward of our past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions, and acquires the name of taste. By what rule that does not leave the reader at the poet's mercy, and the poet at his own, is the latter to distinguish between the language suitable to suppressed, and the language which is characteristic of indulged, anger? Or between that of rage and that of jealousy? Is it obtained by wandering about in search of angry or jealous people in uncultivated society, in order to copy their words? Or not far rather by the power of imagination proceeding upon the all in each of human nature? By meditation, rather than by observation? And by the latter in consequence only of the former? As eyes, for which the former has predetermined their field of vision, and to which, as to its organ, it communicates a microscopic power? There is not, I firmly believe, a man now living, who has from his own inward experience a clearer intuition than Mr. Wordsworth himself, that the last mentioned are the true sources of genial discrimination. Through the same process and by the same creative agency will the poet distinguish the degree and kind of the excitement produced by the very act of poetic composition. As intuitively will he know, what differences of style it at once inspires and justifies; what intermixture of conscious volition is natural to that state; and in what instances such figures and colours of speech degenerate into mere creatures of an arbitrary purpose, cold technical artifices of ornament or connection. For even as truth is its own light and evidence, discovering at once itself and falsehood, so is it the prerogative of poetic genius to distinguish by parental instinct its proper offspring from the changelings, which the gnomes of vanity or the fairies of fashion may have laid in its cradle or called by its names. Could a rule be given from without, poetry would cease to be poetry, and sink into a mechanical art. It would be *μόρφωσις* not *ποίησις*. The rules of the imagination are themselves the very powers of growth and production. The words, to which they

are reducible, present only the outlines and external appearance of the fruit. A deceptive counterfeit of the superficial form and colours may be elaborated; but the marble peach feels cold and heavy, and children only put it to their mouths. We find no difficulty in admitting as excellent, and the legitimate language of poetic fervour self-impassioned, Donne's apostrophe to the Sun in the second stanza of his *Progress of the Soul*:

"Thee, eye of heaven! this great soul envies not:  
By thy male force is all we have begot.  
In the first East thou now beginn'st to shine,  
Suck'st early balm and island spices there;  
And wilt anon in thy loose-rein'd career  
At Tagus, Po, Seine, Thames, and Danow dine,  
And see at night this western world of mine:  
Yet hast thou not more nations seen than she,  
Who before thee one day began to be,  
And thy frail light being quenched, shall long, long outlive thee?"

Or the next stanza but one:

"Great Destiny, the commissary of God,  
That hast marked out a path and period  
For ev'ry thing! Who, where we offspring took,  
Our ways and ends see'st at one instant: thou  
Knot of all causes! Thou, whose changeless brow  
Ne'er smiles or frowns! O! vouchsafe thou to look,  
And shew my story in thy eternal book," &c.

As little difficulty do we find in excluding from the honours of unaffected warmth and elevation the madness prepense of pseudo-poetry, or the startling hysteric of weakness over-exerting itself, which bursts on the unprepared reader in sundry odes and apostrophes to abstract terms. Such are the Odes to Jealousy, to Hope, to Oblivion, and the like, in Doddsley's Collection and the magazines of that day, which seldom fail to remind me of an Oxford copy of verses on the Two Suttons, commencing with:

"Inoculation, heavenly maid! descend!"

It is not to be denied that men of undoubted talents, and even poets of true though not of first-rate genius, have, from a mistaken theory, deluded both themselves and others in the opposite extreme. I once read to a company of sensible and well-educated women the introductory period of Cowley's preface to his Pindaric odes, written in imitation of the style and manner of the odes of Pindar. "If," says Cowley, "a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another; as may appear when he that understands not the original reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin



prose, than which nothing seems more raving." I then proceeded with his own free version of the second Olympic, composed for the charitable purpose of rationalizing the Theban Eagle:

"Queen of all harmonious things,  
Dancing words and speaking strings,  
What God, what hero wilt thou sing?  
What happy man to equal glories bring?  
Begin, begin thy noble choice,  
And let the hills around reflect the image of thy voice.  
Pisa does to Jove belong,  
Jove and Pisa claim thy song.  
The fair first-fruits of war, th' Olympic games,  
Alcides offer'd up to Jove;  
Alcides too thy strings may move!  
But oh! what man to join with these can worthy prove?  
Join Theron boldly to their sacred names;  
Theron the next honour claims;  
Theron to no man gives place;  
Is first in Pisa's and in Virtue's race;  
Theron there, and he alone,  
Ev'n his own swift forefathers has outgone."

One of the company exclaimed, with the full assent of the rest, that if the original were madder than this, it must be incurably mad. I then translated the ode from the Greek, and as nearly as possible word for word; and the impression was, that in the general movement of the periods, in the form of the connections and transitions, and in the sober majesty of lofty sense, it appeared to them to approach more nearly than any other poetry they had heard to the style of our Bible in the prophetic books. The first strophe will suffice as a specimen:

"Ye harp-controlling hymns! (or) ye hymns the sovereigns of harps!  
What God? what Hero?  
What Man shall we celebrate?  
Truly Pisa indeed is of Jove.  
But the Olympiad (or the Olympic games) did Hercules establish,  
The first-fruits of the spoils of war.  
But Theron for the four-horsed car,  
That bore victory to him,  
It behoves us now to voice aloud:  
The Just, the Hospitable,  
The Bulwark of Agrigentum,  
Of renowned fathers  
The Flower, even him  
Who preserves his native city erect and safe."

But are such rhetorical caprices condemnable only for their deviation from the language of real life? and are they by no other means to be precluded, but by the rejection of all distinctions between prose and verse, save that of metre? Surely, good sense and a moderate insight into the constitution of the human mind

would be amply sufficient to prove that such language and such combinations are the native produce neither of the fancy nor of the imagination; that their operation consists in the excitement of surprise by the juxtaposition and apparent reconciliation of widely different or incompatible things. As when, for instance, the hills are made to reflect the image of a voice. Surely no unusual taste is requisite to see clearly that this compulsory juxtaposition is not produced by the presentation of impressive or delightful forms to the inward vision, nor by any sympathy with the modifying powers with which the genius of the poet had united and inspirited all the objects of his thought; that it is therefore a species of wit, a pure work of the will, and implies a leisure and self-possession both of thought and of feeling, incompatible with the steady fervour of a mind possessed and filled with the grandeur of its subject. To sum up the whole in one sentence: When a poem, or a part of a poem, shall be adduced, which is evidently vicious in the figures and contexture of its style, yet for the condemnation of which no reason can be assigned, except that it differs from the style in which men actually converse, then, and not till then, can I hold this theory to be either plausible or practicable, or capable of furnishing either rule, guidance, or precaution, that might not, more easily and more safely, as well as more naturally, have been deduced in the author's own mind from considerations of grammar, logic, and the truth and nature of things, confirmed by the authority of works whose fame is not of one country, nor of one age.



## CHAPTER XIX.

*Continuation—Concerning the real object which, it is probable, Mr. Wordsworth had before him, in his critical preface—Elucidation and application of this.*

**I**T might appear from some passages in the former part of Mr. Wordsworth's preface, that he meant to confine his theory of style, and the necessity of a close accordance with the actual language of men, to those particular subjects from low and rustic life, which by way of experiment he had purposed to naturalize as a new species in our English poetry. But from the train of argument that follows, from the reference to Milton, and from the spirit of his critique on Gray's Sonnet, those sentences appear to have been rather courtesies of modesty than actual limitations of his system. Yet so groundless does this system appear on a close

examination, and so strange and overwhelming\* in its consequences, that I cannot, and I do not, believe that the poet did ever himself adopt it in the unqualified sense in which his expressions have been understood by others, and which indeed, according to all the common laws of interpretation, they seem to bear. What then did he mean? I apprehend that, in the clear perception, not unaccompanied with disgust or contempt, of the gaudy affectations of a style which passed too current with too many for poetic diction (though, in truth, it had as little pretensions to poetry as to logic or common sense), he narrowed his view for the time; and feeling a justifiable preference for the language of nature and of good sense, even in its humblest and least ornamented forms, he suffered himself to express, in terms at once too large and too exclusive, his predilection for a style the most remote possible from the false and showy splendour which he wished to explode. It is possible that this predilection, at first merely comparative, deviated for a time into direct partiality. But the real object which he had in view was, I doubt not, a species of excellence which had been long before most happily characterized by the judicious and amiable Garve, whose works are so justly beloved and esteemed by the Germans, in his remarks on Gellert,† from which the following is literally translated:—"The talent that is required, in order to make excellent verses, is perhaps greater than the philosopher is ready to admit, or would find it in his power to acquire; the talent to seek only the apt expression of the thought, and yet to find at the same time with it the rhyme and the metre. Gellert possessed this happy gift, if ever any one of our poets possessed it; and nothing perhaps contributed more to the great and universal impression which his fables made on their first publication, or conduces more to their continued popularity. It was a strange and curious phenomenon, and such as in Germany had been previously unheard of, to read verses in which everything was expressed, just as one would wish to talk, and yet all dignified, attractive, and interesting; and all at the same time perfectly correct as to the measure of the syllables and the rhyme. It is certain that poetry, when it has attained this excellence, makes a

\* I had in my mind the striking but untranslatable epithet, which the celebrated Mendelssohn applied to the great founder of the Critical Philosophy, "*Der allesermäwende KANT*," i.e. the all-be-crushing or rather the all-to-nothing-crushing KANT. In the facility and force of compound epithets, the German from the number of its cases and inflections approaches to the Greek, that language so

"Bless'd in the happy marriage of sweet words."

It is in the woeful harshness of its sounds alone that the German need shrink from the comparison.

† See *Sammlung Einiger Abhandlungen, von Christian Garve*.

far greater impression than prose. So much so indeed, that even the gratification which the very rhymes afford, becomes then no longer a contemptible or trifling gratification."

However novel this phenomenon may have been in Germany at the time of Gellert, it is by no means new, nor yet of recent existence in our language. Spite of the licentiousness with which Spenser occasionally compels the orthography of his words into a subservience to his rhymes, the whole *Faëry Queen* is an almost continued instance of this beauty. Waller's song, *Go, lovely Rose, &c.*, is doubtless familiar to most of my readers; but if I had happened to have had by me the poems of Cotton, more but far less deservedly celebrated as the author of the *Virgil travestied*, I should have indulged myself, and I think have gratified many who are not acquainted with his serious works, by selecting some admirable specimens of this style. There are not a few poems in that volume, replete with every excellence of thought, image, and passion, which we expect or desire in the poetry of the milder muse, and yet so worded that the reader sees no one reason either in the selection or the order of the words why he might not have said the very same in an appropriate conversation, and cannot conceive how indeed he could have expressed such thoughts otherwise, without loss or injury to his meaning.

But in truth our language is, and from the first dawn of poetry ever has been, particularly rich in compositions distinguished by this excellence. The final *e*, which is now mute, in Chaucer's age was either sounded or dropped indifferently. We ourselves still use either *beloved* or *below'd* according as the rhyme, or measure, or the purpose of more or less solemnity may require. Let the reader, then, only adopt the pronunciation of the poet and of the court at which he lived, both with respect to the final *e* and to the accentuation of the last syllable: I would then venture to ask, what even in the colloquial language of elegant and unaffected women (who are the peculiar mistresses of "pure English and undefiled")—what could we hear more natural, or seemingly more unstudied, than the following stanzas from Chaucer's *Troilus and Creseide*:

"And after this forth to the gate he went,  
 Ther as Creseide out rode a ful gode paas:  
 And up and down there made he many a wente,  
 And to himselfe ful oft he said, Alas!  
 Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:  
 As woulde blisful God now for his jole,  
 I might her sene agen come in to Troie!  
 And to the yondir hil I gan her guide,  
 Alas! and there I toke of her my leve:

And yond I saw her to her fathir ride;  
For sorow of whiche mine hart shall to-cleve;  
And hithir home I came whan it was eve;  
And here I dwel; out-cast from allè jole,  
And shall, til I maie sene her este in Troia.

And of himselfe imaginid he ofte  
To ben defaltid, pale and woxen leese  
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe,  
What may it be? who can the sothè guess,  
Why Troilus hath al this heviness?  
And al this n' as but his melancolie,  
That he had of himselfe suche fantasie.

Anothir time imaginin he would  
Thate every wight, that past him by the wey  
Had of him routhe, and that thei saien should,  
I am right sorry, Troilus wol dey!

And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey  
As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede  
As he that stode betwixin hope and drede:

For which him likid in his songis shewe  
Th' encheson of his wo as he best might,  
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe.  
Somwhat his woeful herté for to light,  
And when he was from every mann's sight  
With softé voice he of his lady dere,  
That absent was, gan sing as ye may here:

\* \* \* \* \*

This song when he thus songin had, ful sone  
He fel agen into his sighis olde:  
And every night, as was his wonte to done,  
He stodè the bright moonè to beholde  
And all his sorowe to the moone he tolde,  
And said: I wis, whan thou art hornid newe,  
I shall be glad, if al the world be trewe!"

Another exquisite master of this species of style, where the scholar and the poet supplies the material, but the perfect well-bred gentleman the expressions and the arrangement, is George Herbert. As from the nature of the subject, and the too frequent quaintness of the thoughts, his *Temple*, or *Sacred Poems* and *Private Ejaculations*, are comparatively but little known, I shall extract two poems. The first is a sonnet, equally admirable for the weight, number, and expression of the thoughts, and for the simple dignity of the language (unless, indeed, a fastidious taste should object to the latter half of the sixth line). The second is a poem of greater length, which I have chosen not only for the present purpose, but likewise as a striking example and illustration of an assertion hazarded in a former page of these sketches; namely, that the characteristic fault of our elder poets is the reverse of that which distinguishes too many of our more recent versifiers; the one conveying the most fantastic thoughts in the most correct and natural language, the other in the most

fantastic language conveying the most trivial thoughts. The latter is a riddle of words; the former an enigma of thoughts. The one reminds me of an odd passage in Drayton's *Ideas*:

## SONNET IX.

As other men, so I myself do muse,  
Why in this sort I wrest invention so;  
And why these *giddy metaphors* I use,  
Leaving the path the greater part do go?  
I will resolve you: *I am lunatic!*

The other recalls a still odder passage in *The Synagogue*, or the *Shadow of the Temple*, a connected series of poems in imitation of Herbert's *Temple*, and in some editions annexed to it.

"O how my mind  
Is gravell'd!  
Not a thought,  
That I can find,  
But's ravell'd  
All to nought!  
Short ends of threads,  
And narrow shreds  
Of lists,  
Knot's snarled ruffs,  
Loose broken tufts  
Of twists,  
Are my torn meditation's ragged clothing.  
Which, wound and woven, shape a suit for nothing:  
One while I think, and then I am in pain  
To think how to unthink that thought again!"

Immediately after these burlesque passages, I cannot proceed to the extracts promised, without changing the ludicrous tone of feeling by the interposition of the three following stanzas of Herbert's:

## VIRTUE.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky:  
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,  
For thou must die!

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave  
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:  
Thy root is ever in its grave,  
And thou must die!

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,  
A box where sweets compacted lie:  
My music shows ye have your closes,  
And all must die!

## THE BOSOM SIN:

A SONNET BY GEORGE HERBERT.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!  
Parents first season us; then schoolmasters

Deliver us to laws: they send us bound  
To rules of reason, holy messengers,  
Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,  
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,  
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,  
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises;  
Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,  
The sound of Glory ringing in our ears:  
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;  
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears!  
Yet all these fences, and their whole array  
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

## LOVE UNKNOWN.

Dear friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad:  
And in my faintings, I presume, your love  
Will more comply than help. A Lord I had,  
And have, of whom some grounds, which may improve,  
I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.  
To him I brought a dish of fruit one day  
And in the middle placed my heart. But he  
(I sigh to say)

Look'd on a servant who did know his eye  
Better than you know me, or (which is one)  
Than I myself. The servant instantly  
Quitting the fruit, seized on my heart alone,  
And threw it in a font, wherein did fall  
A stream of blood, which issued from the side  
Of a great rock: I well remember all,  
And have good cause: there it was, dipped and dyed,  
And washed, and wrung! the very wringing yet  
Enforceth tears. "Your heart was foul, I fear."  
Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit  
Many a fault, more than my lease will bear;  
Yet still ask'd pardon, and was not denied.  
But you shall hear. After my heart was well,  
And clean and fair, as I one eventide

(I sigh to tell)

Walked by myself abroad, I saw a large  
And spacious furnace flaming, and thereon  
A boiling caldron, round about whose verge,  
Was in great letters set AFFLICTION.  
The greatness show'd the owner. So I went  
To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,  
Thinking with that, which I did thus present,  
To warm his love, which, I did fear, grew cold.  
But as my heart did tender it, the man  
Who was to take it from me, slipped his hand,  
And threw my heart into the scalding pan;  
My heart that brought it (do you understand?)  
The offerer's heart. "Your heart was hard, I fear."  
Indeed 'tis true. I found a callous matter  
Began to spread and to expatiate there:  
But with a richer drug than scalding water  
I bath'd it often, even with holy blood,  
Which at a board, while many drank bare wine,  
A friend did steal into my cup for good,  
Even taken inwardly, and most divine





the best, but as the only commendable style, should have proceeded from a poet, whose diction, next to that of Shakespeare and Milton, appears to me, of all others, the most individualized and characteristic. And let it be remembered, too, that I am now interpreting the controverted passages of Mr. W.'s critical preface by the purpose and object which he may be supposed to have intended, rather than by the sense which the words themselves must convey, if they are taken without this allowance.

A person of any taste, who had but studied three or four of Shakespeare's principal plays, would, without the name affixed, scarcely fail to recognise as Shakespeare's a quotation from any other play, though but of a few lines. A similar peculiarity, though in a less degree, attends Mr. Wordsworth's style, whenever he speaks in his own person; or whenever, though under a feigned name, it is clear that he himself is still speaking, as in the different *dramatis personæ* of *The Recluse*. Even in the other poems in which he purposes to be most dramatic, there are few in which it does not occasionally burst forth. The reader might often address the poet in his own words with reference to persons introduced:

"It seems, as I retrace the ballad line by line,  
That but half of it is theirs, and the better half is thine."

Who, having been previously acquainted with any considerable portion of Mr. Wordsworth's publications, and having studied them with a full feeling of the author's genius, would not at once claim as Wordsworthian the little poem on the rainbow?

"The child is father of the man," &c

Or in the *Lucy Gray*?

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew:  
She dwelt on a wide moor;  
The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door."

Or in the *Idle Shepherd Boys*?

"Along the river's stony marge  
The sand-lark chaunts a joyous song;  
The thrush is busy in the wood,  
And carols loud and strong.  
A thousand lambs are on the rocks  
All newly born! both earth and sky  
Keep jubilee, and more than all,  
Those boys with their green coronal,  
They never heard the cry,  
That plaintive cry! which up the hill  
Comes from the depth of Dungeon Gill."

Need I mention the exquisite description of the Sea Loch in the Blind Highland Boy. Who but a poet tells a tale in such language to the little ones by the fire-side as—

“ Yet had he many a restless dream,  
Both when he heard the eagle's scream,  
And when he heard the torrents roar,  
And heard the water beat the shore  
Near where their cottage stood.

“ Beside a lake their cottage stood,  
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood;  
But one of mighty size, and strange;  
That rough or smooth is full of change,  
And stirring in its bed.

“ For to this lake by night and day,  
The great sea-water finds its way  
Through long, long windings of the hills,  
And drinks up all the pretty rills;  
And rivers large and strong:

“ Then hurries back the road it came—  
Returns on errand still the same;  
This did it when the earth was new;  
And this for evermore will do,  
As long as earth shall last.

“ And with the coming of the tide,  
Come boats and ships that sweetly ride,  
Between the woods and lofty rocks;  
And to the shepherds with their flocks  
Bring tales of distant lands.”

I might quote almost the whole of his *Ruth*, but take the following stanzas:

“ But as you have before been told,  
This stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
And with his dancing crest,  
So beautiful, through savage lands  
Had roam'd about with vagrant bands  
Of Indians in the West.

“ The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky,  
Might well be dangerous food  
For him, a youth to whom was given  
So much of earth, so much of heaven,  
And such impetuous blood.

“ Whatever in those climes he found  
Irregular in sight or sound,  
Did to his mind impart  
A kindred impulse; seem'd allied  
To his own powers, and justified  
The workings of his heart.

“ Nor less to feed voluptuous thought  
The beauteous forms of nature wrought

Fair trees and lovely flowers;  
The breezes their own languor lent,  
The stars had feelings, which they sent  
Into those magic bowers.

" Yet in his worst pursuits, I ween,  
That sometimes there did intervene  
Pure hopes of high intent :  
For passions, link'd to forms so fair  
And stately, needs must have their share  
Of noble sentiment."

But from Mr. Wordsworth's more elevated compositions, which already form three-fourths of his works, and will, I trust, constitute hereafter a still greater proportion;—from these, whether in rhyme or in blank verse, it would be difficult and almost superfluous to select instances of a diction peculiarly his own, of a style which cannot be imitated without being at once recognised as originating in Mr. Wordsworth. It would not be easy to open on any one of his loftier strains, that does not contain examples of this; and more in proportion as the lines are more excellent and most like the author. For those who may happen to be less familiar with his writings, I will give three specimens taken with little choice. The first from the lines on the Boy of Windermere,—who

" Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him. And they would shout,  
Across the watery vale and shout again  
With long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud  
Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild  
Of mirth and jocund din ! And when it chanced,  
That pauses of deep silence mock'd his skill,  
Then sometimes in that silence, while he hung  
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain torrents : or the visible scene \*

\* Mr. Wordsworth's having judiciously adopted "*concourse wild*" in this passage for "*a wild scene*," as it stood in the former edition, encourages me to hazard a remark, which I certainly should not have made in the works of a poet less austere accurate in the use of words than he is, to his own great honour. It respects the propriety of the word "*scene*," even in the sentence in which it is retained. Dryden, and he only in his more careless verses, was the first, as far as my researches have discovered, who, for the convenience of rhyme, used this word in the vague sense which has been since too current even in our best writers, and which (unfortunately, I think) is given as its first explanation in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary, and therefore would be taken by an incautious reader as its proper sense. In Shakespeare and Milton the word is never used without

some clear reference, proper or metaphorical, to the theatre. Thus Milton :

" Cedar and pine, and fir and branching palm  
A sylvan scene; and as the ranks ascend  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view."

I object to any extension of its meaning because the word is already more equivocal than might be wished; inasmuch as in the limited use, which I recommend, it may still signify two different things; namely, the scenery, and the characters and actions presented on the stage during the presence of particular scenes. It can therefore be preserved from obscurity only by keeping the original signification full in the mind. Thus Milton again:

" Prepare thee for another scene."

*Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake."*

The second shall be that noble imitation of Drayton \* (if it was not rather a coincidence) in the Joanna :

" When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,  
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld  
That ravishment of mind, and laughed aloud.  
The rock, like something starting from a sleep,  
Took up the lady's voice, and laughed again !  
That ancient woman seated on Helm-crag  
Was ready with her cavern ! Hammar-scar,  
And the tall steep of Silver-How sent forth  
A noise of laughter : southern Loughrigg heard,  
And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone.  
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky  
Carried the lady's voice !—old Skiddaw blew  
His speaking trumpet !—back out of the clouds  
From Glaramara southward came the voice :  
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head !"

The third, which is in rhyme, I take from the Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the restoration of Lord Clifford, the shepherd, to the estate of his ancestors :

" Now another day is come  
Fitter hope, and nobler doom :  
He hath thrown aside his crook,  
And hath buried deep his book ;  
Armour rusting in the halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls ;  
Quell the Scot, exclaims the lance !  
Bear me to the heart of France,  
Is the longing of the shield—  
Tell thy name, thou trembling field !  
Field of death, where'er thou be,  
Groan thou with our victory !  
Happy day, and mighty hour,  
When our shepherd, in his power,  
Mailed and horsed with lance and sword,  
To his ancestors restored,  
Like a re-appearing star,  
Like a glory from afar,  
First shall head the flock of war !"

\* " Which Copland scarce had spoke, but  
quickly every hill  
Upon her verge that stands, the neighbour-  
ing vallies fill ;  
Helvillon from his height, it through the  
mountains threw,  
From whom as soon again, the sound  
Dunbalraze drew,  
From whose stone-trophied head, it on the  
Wendress went,

Which, tow'rds the sea again, resounded it  
to Dent.  
That Brodwater, therewith within her  
banks astound,  
In sailing to the sea told it to Egremound,  
Whose buildings, walks and streets, with  
echoes loud and long,  
Did mightily commend old Copland for  
her song !"

DRAYTON'S *Polyolbion* : Song XXX

"Alas! the fervent harper did not know,  
That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,  
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,  
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

"Love had he found in huts where poor men lie:  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

The words themselves in the foregoing extracts are, no doubt, sufficiently common for the greater part. (But in what poem are they not so? if we except a few misadventurous attempts to translate the arts and sciences into verse?) In *The Excursion* the number of polysyllabic (or what the common people call dictionary) words is more than usually great. And so must it needs be, in proportion to the number and variety of an author's conceptions, and his solicitude to express them with precision. But are those words in those places commonly employed in real life to express the same thought or outward thing? Are they the style used in the ordinary intercourse of spoken words? No; nor are the modes of connections: and still less the breaks and transitions. Would any but a poet—at least could any one without being conscious that he had expressed himself with noticeable vivacity—have described a bird singing loud by, "The thrush is *busy* in the wood?" Or have spoken of boys with a string of club-moss round their rusty hats, as the boys "*with their green coronal*"? Or have translated a beautiful May-day into "*Both earth and sky keep jubilee*?" Or have brought all the different marks and circumstances of a sea-loch before the mind, as the actions of a living and acting power? Or have represented the reflection of the sky in the water as, "*That uncertain heaven received into the bosom of the steady lake*"? Even the grammatical construction is not unfrequently peculiar; as, "The wind, the tempest roaring high, the tumult of a tropic sky, might well be *dangerous food to him*, a youth to whom was given," &c. There is a peculiarity in the frequent use of the *συνάπτητον* (i. e., the omission of the connective particle before the last of several words, or several sentences used grammatically as single words, all being in the same case and governing or governed by the same verb), and not less in the construction of words by apposition (*to him, a youth*). In short, were there excluded from Mr. Wordsworth's poetic compositions all that a literal adherence to the theory of his preface would exclude, two-thirds at least of the marked beauties of his poetry must be erased. For a far greater number of lines would be sacrificed than in any other recent poet; because the pleasure

received from Wordsworth's poems being less derived either from excitement of curiosity or the rapid flow of narration, the striking passages form a larger proportion of their value. I do not adduce it as a fair criterion of comparative excellence, nor do I even think it such; but merely as matter of fact. I affirm, that from no contemporary writer could so many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are found, for their own independent weight or beauty. From the sphere of my own experience, I can bring to my recollection three persons, of no every-day powers and acquirements, who had read the poems of others with more and more unalloyed pleasure, and had thought more highly of their authors, as poets; who yet have confessed to me, that from no modern work had so many passages started up anew in their minds at different times, and as different occasions had awakened a meditative mood.



## CHAPTER XXI.

Remarks on the present mode of conducting critical journals.

LONG have I wished to see a fair and philosophical inquisition into the character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works; and a positive, not a comparative, appreciation of their characteristic excellences, deficiencies, and defects. I know no claim that the mere opinion of any individual can have to weigh down the opinion of the author himself; against the probability of whose parental partiality we ought to set that of his having thought longer and more deeply on the subject. But I should call that investigation fair and philosophical, in which the critic announces and endeavours to establish the principles, which he holds for the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their application to the different *classes* of poetry. Having thus prepared his canons of criticism for praise and condemnation, we would proceed to particularize the most striking passages to which he deems them applicable, faithfully noticing the frequent or infrequent recurrence of similar merits or defects, and as faithfully distinguishing what is characteristic from what is accidental, or a mere flagging of the wing. Then if his premises be rational, his deductions legitimate, and his conclusions justly applied, the reader, and possibly the poet himself, may adopt his judgment in the light of judgment and in the inde

pendence of free agency. If he has erred, he presents his errors in a definite place and tangible form, and holds the torch and guides the way to their detection.

I most willingly admit, and estimate at a high value, the services which the *Edinburgh Review*, and others formed afterwards on the same plan, have rendered to society in the diffusion of knowledge. I think the commencement of the *Edinburgh Review* an important epoch in periodical criticism; and that it has a claim upon the gratitude of the literary republic, and indeed of the reading public at large, for having originated the scheme of reviewing those books only, which are susceptible and deserving of argumentative criticism. Not less meritorious, and far more faithfully and in general far more ably executed, is their plan of supplying the vacant place of the trash or mediocrity wisely left to sink into oblivion by their own weight, with original essays on the most interesting subjects of the time, religious or political; in which the titles of the books or pamphlets prefixed furnish only the name and occasion of the disquisition. I do not arraign the keenness or asperity of its damnatory style, in and for itself, as long as the author is addressed or treated as the mere impersonation of the work then under trial. I have no quarrel with them on this account, as long as no personal allusions are admitted, and no re-commitment (for new trial) of juvenile performances, that were published, perhaps forgotten, many years before the commencement of the review: since for the forcing back of such works to public notice no motives are easily assignable, but such as are furnished to the critic by his own personal malignity; or what is still worse, by a habit of malignity in the form of mere wantonness.

"No private grudge they need, no personal spite:  
The *vinea sectio* is its own delight!  
All enmity, all envy, they disclaim,  
Disinterested thieves of our good name;  
Cool, sober murderers of their neighbour's fame!"

S. T. C.

Every censure, every sarcasm respecting a publication which the critic, with the criticized work before him, can make good, is the critic's right. The writer is authorized to reply, but not to complain. Neither can any one prescribe to the critic how soft or how hard, how friendly or how bitter, shall be the phrases which he is to select for the expression of such reprehension or ridicule. The critic must know what effect it is his object to produce; and with a view to this effect must he weigh his words. But as soon as the critic betrays that he knows more of his

author than the author's publications could have told him, as soon as from this more intimate knowledge, elsewhere obtained, he avails himself of the slightest trait *against* the author, his censure instantly becomes personal injury, his sarcasms personal insults. He ceases to be a critic, and takes on him the most contemptible character to which a rational creature can be degraded, that of a gossip, backbiter, and pasquillant: but with this heavy aggravation, that he steals the unquiet, the deforming passions of the world, into the museum; into the very place which, next to the chapel and oratory, should be our sanctuary, and secure place of refuge; offers abominations on the altar of the Muses; and makes its sacred piling the very circle in which he conjures up the lying and profane spirit.

This determination of unlicensed personality, and of permitted and legitimate censure (which I owe in part to the illustrious Lessing, himself a model of acute, spirited, sometimes stinging, but always argumentative and honourable criticism) is, beyond controversy, the true one; and though I would not myself exercise all the rights of the latter, yet, let but the former be excluded, I submit myself to its exercise in the hands of others, without complaint and without resentment.

Let a communication be formed between any number of learned men in the various branches of science and literature; and whether the president or central committee be in London, or Edinburgh, if only they previously lay aside their individuality, and pledge themselves inwardly, as well as ostensibly, to administer judgment according to a constitution and code of laws; and if by grounding this code on the two-fold basis of universal morals and philosophic reason, independent of all foreseen application to particular works and authors, they obtain the right to speak each as the representative of their body corporate; they shall have honour and good wishes from me, and I shall accord to them their fair dignities, though self-assumed, not less cheerfully than if I could inquire concerning them in the herald's office, or turn to them in the book of peerage. However loud may be the outcries for prevented or subverted reputation, however numerous and impatient the complaints of merciless severity and insupportable despotism, I shall neither feel nor utter aught but to the defence and justification of the critical machine. Should any literary Quixote find himself provoked by its sounds and regular movements, I should admonish him, with Sancho Panza, that it is no giant, but a windmill; there it stands on its own place and its own hillock, never goes out of the way to attack any one, and to none, and



from none, either gives or asks assistance. When the public press has poured in any part of its produce between its mill-stones, it grinds it off, one man's sack the same as another, and with whatever wind may then happen to be blowing. All the two-and-thirty winds are alike its friends. Of the whole wide atmosphere, it does not desire a single finger-breadth more than what is necessary for its sails to turn round in. But this space must be left free and unimpeded. Gnats, beetles, wasps, butterflies, and the whole tribe of ephemerals and insignificants, may flit in and out and between; may hum, and buzz, and jar; may shrill their tiny pipes, and wind their puny horns, unchastised and unnoticed. But idlers and bravados of larger size and prouder show must beware how they place themselves within its sweep. Much less may they presume to lay hands on the sails, the strength of which is neither greater or less than as the wind is which drives them round. Whomsoever the remorseless arm slings aloft, or whirls along with it in the air, he has himself alone to blame; though when the same arm throws him from it, it will more often double than break the force of his fall.

Putting aside the too manifest and too frequent interference of national party, and even personal predilection or aversion, and reserving for deeper feelings those worse and more criminal intrusions into the sacredness of private life, which not seldom merit legal rather than literary chastisement, the two principal objects and occasions which I find for blame and regret in the conduct of the review in question are, first, its unfaithfulness to its own announced and excellent plan, by subjecting to criticism works neither indecent or immoral, yet of such trifling importance even in point of size, and, according to the critic's own verdict, so devoid of all merit, as must excite in the most candid mind the suspicion either that dislike or vindictive feelings were at work; or that there was a cold prudential pre-determination to increase the sale of the Review by flattering the malignant passions of human nature. That I may not myself become subject to the charge, which I am bringing against others, by an accusation without proof, I refer to the article on Dr. Rennell's sermon in the very first number of the *Edinburgh Review* as an illustration of my meaning. If in looking through all the succeeding volumes the reader should find this a solitary instance, I must submit to that painful forfeiture of esteem which awaits a groundless or exaggerated charge.

The second point of objection belongs to this review only in common with all other works of periodical criticism; at least, it

applies in common to the general system of all, whatever exception there may be in favour of particular articles. Or if it attaches to the *Edinburgh Review*, and to its only co-rival, the *Quarterly*, with any peculiar force, this results from the superiority of talent, acquirement, and information which both have so undeniably displayed, and which doubtless deepens the regret though not the blame. I am referring to the substitution of assertion for argument; to the frequency of arbitrary and sometimes petulant verdicts, not seldom unsupported even by a single quotation from the work condemned, which might at least have explained the critic's meaning, if it did not prove the justice of his sentence. Even where this is not the case, the extracts are too often made without reference to any general grounds or rules from which the faultiness or inadmissibility of the qualities attributed may be deduced, and without any attempt to show that the qualities are attributable to the passage extracted. I have met with such extracts from Mr. Wordsworth's poems, annexed to such assertions, as lead me to imagine that the reviewer, having written his critique before he had read the work, had then pricked with a pin for passages wherewith to illustrate the various branches of his preconceived opinions. By what principle of rational choice can we suppose a critic to have been directed (at least in a Christian country, and himself, we hope, a Christian) who gives the following lines, portraying the fervour of solitary devotion excited by the magnificent display of the Almighty's works, as a proof and example of an author's tendency to downright ravings, and absolute unintelligibility?

"O then what soul was his, when on the tops  
Of the high mountains he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—  
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth,  
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay  
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,  
And in their silent faces did he read  
Unutterable love! Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy: his spirit drank  
The spectacle! sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him. They swallowed up  
His animal being: in them did he live,  
And by them did he live: they were his life.

THE EXCURSION.

Can it be expected that either the author or his admirers should be induced to pay any serious attention to decisions which prove nothing but the pitiable state of the critic's own taste and sensibility? On opening the *Review* they see a favourite passage, of

the force and truth of which they had an intuitive certainty in their own inward experience, confirmed, if confirmation it could receive, by the sympathy of their most enlightened friends, some of whom perhaps, even in the world's opinion, hold a higher intellectual rank than the critic himself would presume to claim. And this very passage they find selected as the characteristic effusion of a mind deserted by reason; as furnishing evidence that the writer was raving, or he could not have thus strung words together without sense or purpose! No diversity of taste seems capable of explaining such a contrast in judgment.

That I had overrated the merit of a passage or poem, that I had erred concerning the degree of its excellence, I might be easily induced to believe or apprehend. But that lines, the sense of which I had analyzed and found consonant with all the best convictions of my understanding, and the imagery and diction of which had collected round those convictions my noblest as well as my most delightful feelings; that I should admit such lines to be mere nonsense or lunacy, is too much for the most ingenious arguments to effect. But that such a revolution of taste should be brought about by a few broad assertions, seems little less than impossible. On the contrary, it would require an effort of charity not to dismiss the criticism with the aphorism of the wise man, *in animam malevolam sapientia haud intrare potest*.

What then if this very critic should have cited a large number of single lines, and even of long paragraphs, which he himself acknowledges to possess eminent and original beauty? What if he himself has owned that beauties as great are scattered in abundance throughout the whole book? And yet, though under this impression, should have commenced his critique in vulgar exaltation with a prophecy meant to secure its own fulfilment? With a "This won't do!" What if after such acknowledgments, extorted from his own judgment, he should proceed from charge to charge of tameness and raving, flights and flatness; and at length, consigning the author to the house of incurables, should conclude with a strain of rudest contempt, evidently grounded in the dis-tempered state of his own moral associations? Suppose, too, all this done without a single leading principle established or even announced, and without any one attempt at argumentative deduction, though the poet had presented a more than usual opportunity for it, by having previously made public his own principles of judgment in poetry, and supported them by a connected train of reasoning!

The office and duty of the poet is to select the most dignified as well as

"The gayest, happiest attitude of things."

The reverse, for in all cases a reverse is possible, is the appropriate business of burlesque and travesty, a predominant taste for which has been always deemed a mark of a low and degraded mind. When I was at Rome, among many other visits to the tomb of Julius II., I went thither once with a Prussian artist, a man of genius and great vivacity of feeling. As we were gazing on Michael Angelo's Moses, our conversation turned on the horns and beard of that stupendous statue; of the necessity of each to support the other; of the superhuman effect of the former, and the necessity of the existence of both to give a harmony and integrity both to the image and the feeling excited by it. Conceive them removed, and the statue would become *un-natural*, without being *super-natural*. We called to mind the horns of the rising sun, and I repeated the noble passage from Taylor's Holy Dying. That horns were the emblem of power and sovereignty among the Eastern nations, and are still retained as such in Abyssinia; the Achelous of the ancient Greeks; and the probable ideas and feelings that originally suggested the mixture of the human and the brute form in the figure by which they realized the idea of their mysterious Pan, as representing intelligence blended with a darker power, deeper, mightier, and more universal than the conscious intellect of man, than intelligence; all these thoughts and recollections passed in procession before our minds. My companion, who possessed more than his share of the hatred which his countrymen bore to the French, had just observed to me, "A Frenchman, sir, is the only animal in the human shape that by no possibility can lift itself up to religion or poetry;" when, lo! two French officers of distinction and rank entered the church! "Mark you," whispered the Prussian, "the first thing which those scoundrels will notice (for they will begin by instantly noticing the statue in parts, without one moment's pause of admiration impressed by the whole) will be the horns and the beard. And the associations which they will immediately connect with them will be those of a he-goat and a cuckold." Never did man guess more luckily. Had he inherited a portion of the great legislator's prophetic powers, whose statue we had been contemplating, he could scarcely have uttered words more coincident with the result; for even as he had said, so it came to pass.

In *The Excursion* the poet has introduced an old man, born in

humble but not abject circumstances, who had enjoyed more than usual advantages of education, both from books and from the more awful discipline of nature. This person he represents as having been driven by the restlessness of fervid feelings and from a craving intellect to an itinerant life, and as having, in consequence, passed the larger portion of his time, from earliest manhood, in villages and hamlets from door to door :

"A vagrant merchant bent beneath his load."

Now whether this be a character appropriate to a lofty didactic poem, is perhaps questionable. It presents a fair subject for controversy; and the question is to be determined by the congruity or incongruity of such a character with what shall be proved to be the essential constituents of poetry. But surely the critic who, passing by all the opportunities which such a mode of life would present to such a man; all the advantages of the liberty of nature, of solitude, and of solitary thought; all the varieties of places and seasons, through which his track had lain, with all the varying imagery they bring with them; and lastly, all the observations of men,

"Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits,  
Their passions and their feelings,"

which the memory of these yearly journeys must have given and recalled to such a mind—the critic, I say, who from the multitude of possible associations should pass by all these in order to fix his attention exclusively on the pin-papers, and stay-tapes, which might have been among the wares of his pack: this critic, in my opinion, cannot be thought to possess a much higher or much healthier state of moral feeling than the Frenchman above recorded.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

The characteristic defects of Wordsworth's poetry, with the principles from which the judgment, that they are defects, is deduced—Their proportion to the beauties—For the greatest part characteristic of his theory only.

IF Mr. Wordsworth has set forth principles of poetry which his arguments are insufficient to support, let him and those who have adopted his sentiments be set right by the confutation of those arguments, and by the substitution of more philosophical principles. And still let the due credit be given to the portion and importance of the truths which are blended with his theory:

truths, the too exclusive attention to which had occasioned its errors, by tempting him to carry those truths beyond their proper limits. If his mistaken theory has at all influenced his poetic compositions, let the effects be pointed out, and the instances given. But let it likewise be shown how far the influence has acted; whether diffusively, or only by starts; whether the number and importance of the poems and passages thus infected be great or trifling compared with the sound portion; and lastly, whether they are inwoven into the texture of his works, or are loose and separable. The result of such a trial would evince beyond a doubt, what it is high time to announce decisively and aloud, that the supposed characteristics of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry, whether admired or reprobated; whether they are simplicity or simplicity; faithful adherence to essential nature, or wilful selections from human nature of its meanest forms and under the least attractive associations: are as little the real characteristics of his poetry at large, as of his genius and the constitution of his mind.

In a comparatively small number of poems, he chose to try an experiment; and this experiment we will suppose to have failed. Yet even in these poems it is impossible not to perceive that the natural tendency of the poet's mind is to great objects and elevated conceptions. The poem entitled *Fidelity* is for the greater part written in language as unraised and naked as any perhaps in the two volumes. Yet take the following stanza and compare it with the preceding stanzas of the same poem:

" There sometimes does a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak  
In symphony austere;  
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud,  
And mists that spread the flying shroud;  
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,  
That if it could would hurry past,  
But that enormous barrier holds it fast."

Or compare the four last lines of the concluding stanza with the former half:

" Yet proof was plain that since the day  
On which the traveller thus had died,  
The dog had watched about the spot,  
Or by his master's side:  
*How nourished there for such long time  
He knows who gave that love sublime,  
And gave that strength of feeling, great  
Above all human estimate."*

Can any candid and intelligent mind hesitate in determining which of these best represents the tendency and native character of the poet's genius? Will he not decide that the one was written because the poet would so write, and the other because he could not so entirely repress the force and grandeur of his mind, but that he must in some part or other of every composition write otherwise? In short, that his only disease is the being out of his element; like the swan, that having amused himself, for a while, with crushing the weeds on the river's bank, soon returns to his own majestic movements on its reflecting and sustaining surface. Let it be observed, that I am here supposing the imagined judge, to whom I appeal, to have already decided against the poet's theory, as far as it is different from the principles of the art, generally acknowledged.

I cannot here enter into a detailed examination of Mr. Wordsworth's works; but I will attempt to give the main results of my own judgment, after an acquaintance of many years, and repeated perusals. And though, to appreciate the defects of a great mind it is necessary to understand previously its characteristic excellences, yet I have already expressed myself with sufficient fulness to preclude most of the ill effects that might arise from my pursuing a contrary arrangement. I will therefore commence with what I deem the prominent defects of his poems hitherto published.

The first characteristic, though only occasional defect, which I appear to myself to find in these poems is the inconstancy of the style. Under this name I refer to the sudden and unprepared transitions from lines or sentences of peculiar felicity (at all events striking and original) to a style, not only unimpassioned but undistinguished. He sinks too often and too abruptly to that style which I should place in the second division of language, dividing it into the three species: first, that which is peculiar to poetry; second, that which is only proper in prose; and third, the neutral or common to both. There have been works, such as Cowley's *Essay on Cromwell*, in which prose and verse are intermixed (not as in the *Consolation of Boetius*, or the *Argenis of Barclay*, by the insertion of poems supposed to have been spoken or composed on occasions previously related in prose, but) the poet passing from one to the other as the nature of the thoughts or his own feelings dictated. Yet this mode of composition does not satisfy a cultivated taste. There is something unpleasant in the being thus obliged to alternate states of feeling so dissimilar, and this too in a species of writing, the pleasure from which is in

part derived from the preparation and previous expectation of the reader. A portion of that awkwardness is felt which hangs upon the introduction of songs in our modern comic operas; and to prevent which the judicious Metastasio (as to whose exquisite taste there can be no hesitation, whatever doubts may be entertained as to his poetic genius) uniformly placed the *aria* at the end of the scene, at the same time that he almost always raises and impassions the style of the recitative immediately preceding. Even in real life, the difference is great and evident between words used as the arbitrary marks of thought, our smooth market-coin of intercourse with the image and superscription worn out by currency, and those which convey pictures either borrowed from one outward object to enliven and particularize some other; or used allegorically to body forth the inward state of the person speaking; or such as are at least the exponents of his peculiar turn and unusual extent of faculty. So much so, indeed, that in the social circles of private life we often find a striking use of the latter put a stop to the general flow of conversation, and by the excitement arising from concentrated attention produce a sort of damp and interruption for some minutes after. But in the perusal of works of literary art, we prepare ourselves for such language; and the business of the writer, like that of a painter whose subject requires unusual splendour and prominence, is so to raise the lower and neutral tints, that what in a different style would be the commanding colours, are here used as the means of that gentle degradation requisite in order to produce the effect of a whole. Where this is not achieved in a poem, the metre merely reminds the reader of his claims in order to disappoint them; and where this defect occurs frequently, his feelings are alternately startled by anticlimax and hyperclimax.

I refer the reader to the exquisite stanzas cited for another purpose from *The Blind Highland Boy*; and then annex as being in my opinion instances of this disharmony in style the two following:

“ And one, the rarest, was a shell,  
Which he, poor child, had studied well:  
The shell of a green turtle, thin  
And hollow; you might sit therein,  
It was so wide and deep.”

“ Our Highland Boy oft visited  
The house which held this prize, and led  
By choice or chance did thither come  
One day, when no one was at home,  
And found the door unbarred.”



Or page 172, vol. i. (The Emigrant Mother):

" 'Tis gone forgotten, let me do  
*My best.* There was a smile or two—  
 I can remember them, I see  
 The smiles worth all the world to me  
 Dear Baby, I must lay thee down,  
 Thou troublest me with strange alarms!  
 Smiles hast thou, sweet ones of thine own;  
 I cannot keep thee in my arms,  
 For they confound me: *as it is,*  
 I have forgot those smiles of his!"

Or page 269, vol. i. (To a Skylark):

" Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest,  
 And though little troubled with aloth,  
 Drunken lark! thou would'st be loth  
 To be such a traveller as I.  
 Happy, happy liver!  
*With a soul as strong as a mountain river,*  
*Pouring out praise to th' Almighty Giver!*  
 Joy and jollity be with us both,  
 Hearing thee or else some other,  
 As merry a brother,  
 I on the earth will go plodding on  
 By myself cheerfully till the day is done."

The incongruity which I appear to find in this passage, is that of the two noble lines in italics with the preceding and following. So vol. ii., page 30 (Resolution and Independence):

" Close by a pond, upon the further side  
 He stood alone; a minute's space I guess,  
 I watched him, he continuing motionless;  
 To the pool's further margin then I drew;  
 He being all the while before me full in view."

Compare this with the repetition of the same image, in the next stanza but two:

" And still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
 Beside the little pond or moorish flood,  
 Motionless as a cloud the old man stood:  
 That heareth not the loud winds as they call,  
 And moveth altogether, if it move at all."

Or lastly, the second of the three following stanzas, compared both with the first and the third:

" My former thoughts returned, the fear that kills;  
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;  
 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;  
 And mighty poets in their misery dead.  
 But now, perplex'd by what the old man had said,  
 My question eagerly did I renew,  
 How is it that you live, and what is it you do?

He with a smile did then his tale repeat ;  
 And said, that, gathering leeches far and wide,  
 He travelled : stirring thus about his feet  
 The waters of the ponds where they abide.  
 ' Once I could meet with them on every side,  
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;  
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.'

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
 The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me :  
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
 About the weary moors continually,  
 Wandering about alone and silently."

Indeed, this fine poem is especially characteristic of the author. There is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen. But it would be unjust not to repeat that this defect is only occasional. From a careful re-perusal of the two volumes of poems, I doubt whether the objectionable passages would amount in the whole to one hundred lines; not the eighth part of the number of pages. In *The Excursion* the feeling of incongruity is seldom excited by the diction of any passage considered in itself, but by the sudden superiority of some other passage forming the context.

The second defect I could generalize with tolerable accuracy, if the reader will pardon an uncouth and new-coined word. There is, I should say, not seldom a *matter-of-factness* in certain poems. This may be divided into, first, a laborious minuteness and fidelity in the representation of objects, and their positions, as they appeared to the poet himself; secondly, the insertion of accidental circumstances, in order to the full explanation of his living characters, their dispositions and actions: which circumstances might be necessary to establish the probability of a statement in real life, where nothing is taken for granted by the hearer, but appear superfluous in poetry, where the reader is willing to believe for his own sake. To this accidentality, I object, as contravening the essence of poetry, which Aristotle pronounces to be *σπουδαίωτατον καὶ φιλοσοφώτατον γένος*, the most intense, weighty, and philosophical product of human art; adding, as the reason, that it is the most catholic and abstract. The following passage from Davenant's prefatory letter to Hobbes well expresses this truth: "When I considered the actions which I meant to describe (those inferring the persons) I was again persuaded rather to choose those of a former age than the present; and in a century so far removed as might preserve me from their improper examinations, who know not the requisites of a poem, nor how much pleasure they lose (and even the pleasures of heroic poesy are not unprofitable) who take away the liberty of a poet, and

fetter his feet in the shackles of an historian. For why should a poet doubt in story to mend the intrigues of fortune by more delightful conveyances of probable fictions, because austere historians have entered into bond to truth? An obligation, which were in poets as foolish and unnecessary, as is the bondage of false martyrs, who lie in chains for a mistaken opinion. *But by this I would imply, that truth, narrative and past, is the idol of historians (who worship a dead thing) and truth operative, and by effects continually alive, is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter, but in reason."*

For this minute accuracy in the painting of local imagery, the lines in *The Excursion*, pp. 96, 97, and 98,\* may be taken, if not as a striking instance yet as an illustration of my meaning. It must be some strong motive (as, for instance, that the description was necessary to the intelligibility of the tale) which could induce me to describe in a number of verses, what a draftsman could present to the eye with incomparably greater satisfaction by half a dozen strokes of his pencil, or the painter with as many touches of his brush. Such descriptions too often occasion in the mind of a reader, who is determined to understand his author, a feeling of labour, not very dissimilar to that with which he would construct a diagram, line by line, for a long geometrical proposition. It seems to be like taking the pieces of a dissected map out of its box. We first look at one part and then at another, then join and dove-tail them; and when the successive acts of attention have been completed, there is a retrogressive effort of mind to behold it as a whole. The poet should paint to the imagination, not to the fancy; and I know no happier case to exemplify the distinction between these two faculties. Masterpieces of the former mode of poetic painting abound in the writings of Milton, ex. gr.

"The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,  
But such as at this day to Indians known  
In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms  
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade  
High over-arched, and ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN:  
There oft the Indian Herdsman, shunning heat,  
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds  
At loopholes cut through thickest shade."

MILTON's *Paradise Lost*, ix. 1100.

This is creation rather than painting, or if painting, yet such, and with such co-presence of the whole picture flashed at once upon the eye, as the sun paints in a camera obscura. But the

\* The comment of Book III. "Despondency."

poet must likewise understand and command what Bacon calls the *vestigia communia* of the senses, the latency of all in each, and more especially as by a magical *penna duplex*, the excitement of vision by sound and the exponents of sound. Thus, "The echoing walks between," may be almost said to reverse the fable in tradition of the head of Memnon, in the Egyptian statue. Such may be deservedly entitled the creative words in the world of imagination.

The second division respects an apparent minute adherence to matter-of-fact in character and incidents; a biographical attention to probability, and an anxiety of explanation and retrospect. Under this head I shall deliver, with no feigned diffidence, the results of my best reflection on the great point of controversy between Mr. Wordsworth and his objectors, namely, on the choice of his characters. I have already declared, and, I trust justified, my utter dissent from the mode of argument which his critics have hitherto employed. To their question, why did you choose such a character, or a character from such a rank of life? the poet might, in my opinion, fairly retort: why, with the conception of my character, did you make wilful choice of mean or ludicrous associations not furnished by me, but supplied from your own sickly and fastidious feelings? How was it, indeed, probable, that such arguments could have any weight with an author, whose plan, whose guiding principle, and main object it was to attack and subdue that state of association, which leads us to place the chief value on those things on which man differs from man, and to forget or disregard the high dignities which belong to human nature, the sense and the feeling which may be, and ought to be, found in all ranks? The feelings with which, as Christians, we contemplate a mixed congregation rising or kneeling before their common Maker, Mr. Wordsworth would have us entertain at all times, as men, and as readers; and by the excitement of this lofty, yet prideless impartiality in poetry, he might hope to have encouraged its continuance in real life. The praise of good men be his! In real life, and I trust, even in my imagination, I honour a virtuous and wise man, without reference to the presence or absence of artificial advantages. Whether in the person of an armed baron, a laurelled bard, or of an old pedlar, or still older leech-gatherer, the same qualities of head and heart must claim the same reverence. And even in poetry, I am not conscious that I have ever suffered my feelings to be disturbed or offended by any thoughts or images which the poet himself has not presented.

But yet I object, nevertheless, and for the following reasons. First, because the object in view, as an immediate object, belongs to the moral philosopher, and would be pursued, not only more appropriately, but in my opinion with far greater probability of success, in sermons or moral essays, than in an elevated poem. It seems, indeed, to destroy the main fundamental distinction, not only between a poem and prose, but even between philosophy and works of fiction, inasmuch as it proposes truth for its immediate object instead of pleasure. Now, till the blessed time shall come, when truth itself shall be pleasure, and both shall be so united as to be distinguishable in words only, not in feeling, it will remain the poet's office to proceed upon that state of association which actually exists as general; instead of attempting first to make it what it ought to be, and then to let the pleasure follow. But here is unfortunately a small *Hysteron-Proteron*. For the communication of pleasure is the introductory means by which alone the poet must expect to moralize his readers. Secondly: though I were to admit, for a moment, this argument to be groundless; yet how is the moral effect to be produced, by merely attaching the name of some low profession to powers which are least likely, and to qualities which are assuredly not more likely, to be found in it? The poet, speaking in his own person, may at once delight and improve us by sentiments which teach us the independence of goodness, of wisdom, and even of genius, on the favours of fortune. And having made a due reverence before the throne of Antonine, he may bow with equal awe before Epictetus among his fellow-slaves—

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“and rejoice  
In the plain presence of his dignity.”

Who is not at once delighted and improved, when the poet Wordsworth himself exclaims,

“O many are the poets that are sown  
By Nature; men endowed with highest gifts,  
The vision and the faculty divine,  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,  
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led  
By circumstance to take unto the height  
The measure of themselves, these favour'd beings,  
All but a scattered few, live out their time,  
Husbanding that which they possess within,  
And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds  
Are often those of whom the noisy world  
Hears least.”

THE EXCURSION, Book I.

To use a colloquial phrase, such sentiments, in such language, do one's heart good; though I, for my part, have not the fullest faith in the truth of the observation. On the contrary, I believe the instances to be exceedingly rare; and should feel almost as strong an objection to introduce such a character in a poetic fiction, as a pair of black swans on a lake, in a fancy landscape. When I think how many and how much better books than Homer, or even than Herodotus, Pindar, or Æschylus, could have read, are in the power of almost every man, in a country where almost every man is instructed to read and write; and how restless, how difficultly hidden, the powers of genius are, and yet find even in situations the most favourable, according to Mr. Wordsworth, for the formation of a pure and poetic language—in situations which ensure familiarity with the grandest objects of the imagination—but one, Burns, among the shepherds of Scotland, and not a single poet of humble life among those of English lakes and mountains, I conclude, that Poetic Genius is not only a very delicate, but a very rare plant.

But be this as it may, the feelings with which

“ I think of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,  
The sleepless soul, that perish'd in his pride:  
Of Burns, that walk'd in glory and in joy  
Behind his plough upon the mountain-side,”

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE, v. 7

are widely different from those with which I should read a poem, where the author, having occasion for the character of a poet and a philosopher in the fable of his narration, had chosen to make him a chimney-sweeper; and then, in order to remove all doubts on the subject, had invented an account of his birth, parentage and education, with all the strange and fortunate accidents which had concurred in making him at once poet, philosopher, and sweep! Nothing but biography can justify this. If it be admissible even in a novel, it must be one in the manner of De Foe's, that were meant to pass for histories, not in the manner of Fielding's: in the life of Moll Flanders, or Colonel Jack, not in a Tom Jones, or even a Joseph Andrews. Much less then, can it be legitimately introduced in a poem, the characters of which, amid the strongest individualization, must still remain representative. The precepts of Horace, on this point, are grounded on the nature both of poetry and of the human mind. They are not more peremptory, than wise and prudent. For, in the first place, a deviation from them perplexes the reader's feelings, and

all the circumstances which are feigned in order to make such accidents less improbable, divide and disquiet his faith, rather than aid and support it. Spite of all attempts fiction will appear, and unfortunately not as fictitious but as false. The reader not only knows that the sentiments and the language are the poet's own, and his own too in his artificial character, as poet; but by the fruitless endeavours to make him think the contrary, he is not even suffered to forget it. The effect is similar to that produced by an epic poet, when the fable and characters are derived from Scripture history, as in the Messiah of Klopstock, or in Cumberland's Calvary: and not merely suggested by it as in the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. That illusion, contradistinguished from delusion, that negative faith, which simply permits the images presented to work by their own force, without either denial or affirmation of their real existence by the judgment, is rendered impossible by their immediate neighbourhood to words and facts of known and absolute truth. A faith which transcends even historic belief, must absolutely put out this mere poetic Analogue of faith, as the summer sun is said to extinguish our household fires, when it shines full upon them. What would otherwise have been yielded to as pleasing fiction, is repelled as revolting falsehood. The effect produced in this latter case by the solemn belief of the reader, is in a less degree brought about in the instances to which I have been objecting, by the baffled attempts of the author to make him believe.

Add to all the foregoing, the seeming uselessness both of the project and of the anecdotes from which it is to derive support. Is there one word, for instance, attributed to the pedlar in *The Excursion*, characteristic of a pedlar? One sentiment, that might not more plausibly, even without the aid of any previous explanation, have proceeded from any wise and beneficent old man of a rank or profession in which the language of learning and refinement are naturally to be expected? Need the rank have been at all particularized, where nothing follows which the knowledge of that rank is to explain or illustrate? When on the contrary this information renders the man's language, feelings, sentiments, and information a riddle, which must itself be solved by episodes of anecdote? Finally, when this and this alone, could have induced a genuine poet to inweave in a poem of the loftiest style, and on subjects the loftiest and of the most universal interest, such minute matters of fact, not unlike those furnished for the obituary of a magazine by the friends of

some obscure "ornament of society lately deceased" in some obscure town, as

"Among the hills of Athol he was born.  
There on a small hereditary farm,  
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,  
His Father dwelt; and died in poverty:  
While he, whose lowly fortune I retrace,  
The youngest of three sons, was yet a babe,  
A little one—unconscious of their loss.  
But ere he had outgrown his infant days  
His widowed mother, for a second mate,  
Espoused the teacher of the Village School;  
Who on her offspring zealously bestowed  
Needful instruction."

"From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,  
In summer tended cattle on the hills;  
But through the inclement and the perilous days  
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired  
To his step-father's school," &c.

THE EXCURSION, Book I.

For all the admirable passages interposed in this narration, might, with trifling alterations, have been far more appropriately, and with far greater verisimilitude, told of a poet in the character of a poet; and without incurring another defect which I shall now mention, and a sufficient illustration of which will have been here anticipated.

Third; an undue predilection for the dramatic form in certain poems, from which one or other of two evils result. Either the thoughts and diction are different from that of the poet, and then there arises an incongruity of style; or they are the same and indistinguishable, and then it presents a species of ventriloquism, where two are represented as talking, while in truth one man only speaks.

The fourth class of defects is closely connected with the former; but yet are such as arise likewise from an intensity of feeling disproportionate to such knowledge and value of the objects described, as can be fairly anticipated of men in general, even of the most cultivated classes; and with which therefore few only, and those few particularly circumstanced, can be supposed to sympathize: in this class, I comprise occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying instead of progression of thought. As instances, see page 27, 28, of the Poems, vol. i,\* and the first eighty lines of the Sixth Book of The Excursion.

Fifth and last; thoughts and images too great for the subject.

\* The Anecdote for Fathers.



This is an approximation to what might be called mental bombast, as distinguished from verbal: for, as in the latter there is a disproportion of the expressions to the thoughts, so in this there is a disproportion of thought to the circumstance and occasion. This, by-the-by, is a fault of which none but a man of genius is capable. It is the awkwardness and strength of Hercules with the distaff of Omphale.

It is a well-known fact, that bright colours in motion both make and leave the strongest impressions on the eye. Nothing is more likely too, than that a vivid image or visual spectrum, thus originated, may become the link of association in recalling the feelings and images that had accompanied the original impression. But if we describe this in such lines, as

"They flash upon that inward eye,  
Which is the bliss of solitude!"

in what words shall we describe the joy of retrospection, when the images and virtuous actions of a whole well-spent life, pass before that conscience which is indeed the inward eye: which is indeed "the bliss of solitude?" Assuredly we seem to sink most abruptly, not to say burlesquely, and almost as in a medley, from this couplet to

"And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils."

Vol. I. p. 320.\*

The second is from vol. ii., page 12 (Gipsies), where the poet having gone out for a day's tour of pleasure, meets early in the morning with a knot of Gipsies, who had pitched their blanket-tents and straw beds, together with their children and asses, in some field by the roadside. At the close of the day on his return our tourist found them in the same place. "Twelve hours," says he,

"Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours, are gone while I  
Have been a traveller under open sky,  
Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
Yet as I left I find them here!"

Whereat the poet, without seeming to reflect that the poor tawny wanderers might probably have been tramping for weeks together through road and lane, over moor and mountain, and consequently must have been right glad to rest themselves, their children and cattle, for one whole day; and overlooking the obvious truth, that such repose might be quite as necessary for them, as a walk of the

\* The poem commencing "I wandered lonely as a cloud."

same continuance was pleasing or healthful for the more fortunate poet; expresses his indignation in a series of lines, the diction and imagery of which would have been rather above, than below the mark, had they been applied to the immense empire of China improgressive for thirty centuries :

"The weary Sun betook himself to rest,—  
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,  
Outshining, like a visible God,  
The glorious path in which he trod !  
And now ascending, after one dark hour,  
And one night's diminution of her power,  
Behold the mighty Moon ! this way  
She looks, as if at them—but they  
Regard not her :—oh, better wrong and strife,  
Better vain deeds or evil than such life !  
The silent Heavens have goings on :  
The stars have tasks,—but these have none !"

The last instance of this defect (for I know no other than these already cited), is from The Ode, page 351, vol. ii.,\* where, speaking of a child, "a six year's darling of a pigmy size," he thus addresses him :

"Thou best philosopher who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage ! Thou eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep—  
Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind—  
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find !  
Thou, over whom thy immortality  
Broods like the day, a master o'er the slave,  
A presence which is not to be put by !"

Now here, not to stop at the daring spirit of metaphor which connects the epithets "deaf and silent," with the apostrophised *eye* : or (if we are to refer it to the preceding word, philosopher) the faulty and equivocal syntax of the passage; and without examining the propriety of making a "master brood o'er a slave," or the *day* brood *at all*; we will merely ask, What does all this mean? In what sense is a child of that age a *philosopher*? In what sense does he *read* "the eternal deep"? In what sense is he declared to be "*for ever haunted*" by the Supreme Being? or so inspired as to deserve the splendid titles of a *mighty prophet*, a *blessed seer*? By reflection? by knowledge? by conscious intuition? or by *any* form or modification of consciousness? These would be tidings indeed; but such as would presuppose an immediate revelation to the inspired communicator, and require miracles to authenticate his inspiration. Children at this age give us

\* "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."

no such information of themselves: and at what time were we dipped in the Lethe which has produced such utter oblivion of a state so godlike? There are many of us that still possess some remembrances, more or less distinct, respecting themselves at six years old; pity that the worthless straws only should float, while treasures, compared with which all the mines of Golconda and Mexico were but straws, should be absorbed by some unknown gulf into some unknown abyss.

But if this be too wild and exorbitant to be suspected as having been the poet's meaning; if these mysterious gifts, faculties, and operations, are not accompanied with consciousness; who else is conscious of them? or how can it be called the child, if it be no part of the child's conscious being? For aught I know, the thinking spirit within me may be substantially one with the principle of life, and of vital operation. For aught I know, it may be employed as a secondary agent in the marvellous organization and organic movements of my body. But, surely, it would be strange language to say, that I construct my heart! or that I propel the finer influences through my nerves! or that I compress my brain, and draw the curtains of sleep round my own eyes! Spinoza and Behmen were on different systems both Pantheists; and among the ancients there were philosophers, teachers of the EN KAI PAN, who not only taught that God was All, but that this All constituted God. Yet not even these would confound the *part*, as a part, with the Whole, as the whole. Nay, in no system is the distinction between the individual and God, between the modification, and the one only substance, more sharply drawn than in that of Spinoza. Jacobi, indeed, relates of Lessing, that after a conversation with him at the house of the poet Gleim (the Tyrtæus and Anacreon of the German Parnassus), in which conversation Lessing had avowed privately to Jacobi his reluctance to admit any *personal* existence of the Supreme Being, or the *possibility* of personality except in a finite Intellect, and while they were sitting at table, a shower of rain came on unexpectedly. Gleim expressed his regret at the circumstance, because they had meant to drink their wine in the garden: upon which Lessing, in one of his half-earnest, half-joking moods, nodded to Jacobi, and said, "It is *I*, perhaps, that am doing *that*." i.e., *rain*ing! and Jacobi answered, "Or perhaps *I*:" Gleim contented himself with staring at them both, without asking for any explanation.

So with regard to this passage. In what sense can the magnificent attributes, above quoted, be appropriated to a *child*, which

would not make them equally suitable to a *bee*, or a *dog*, or a *field of corn*; or even to a ship, or to the wind and waves that propel it? The omnipresent Spirit works equally in *them* as in the child; and the child is equally unconscious of it as they. It cannot surely be, that the four lines, immediately following, are to contain the explanation?

"To whom the grave  
Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight  
Of day or the warm light,  
A place of thought where we in waiting lie."

Surely, it cannot be that this wonder-rousing apostrophe is but a comment on the little poem of "We are Seven?" that the whole meaning of the passage is reducible to the assertion that a child, who, by-the-by, at six years old would have been better instructed in most Christian families, has no other notion of death than that of lying in a dark, cold place? And still, I hope, not as in a place of thought! not the frightful notion of lying awake in his grave! The analogy between death and sleep is too simple, too natural, to render so horrible a belief possible for children; even had they not been in the habit, as all Christian children are, of hearing the latter term used to express the former. But if the child's belief be only, that "he is not dead, but sleepeth:" wherein does it differ from that of his father and mother, or any other adult or instructed person? To form an idea of a thing's becoming nothing; or of nothing becoming a thing; is impossible to all finite beings alike, of whatever age, and however educated or uneducated. Thus it is with splendid paradoxes in general. If the words are taken in the common sense, they convey an absurdity; and if, in contempt of dictionaries and custom, they are so interpreted as to avoid the absurdity, the meaning dwindles into some bald truism. Thus you must at once understand the words contrary to their common import, in order to arrive at any sense; and according to their common import, if you are to receive from them any feeling of sublimity or admiration.

Though the instances of this defect in Mr. Wordsworth's poems are so few, that for themselves it would have been scarcely just to attract the reader's attention toward them; yet I have dwelt on it, and perhaps the more for this very reason. For being so very few, they cannot sensibly detract from the reputation of an author, who is even characterised by the number of profound truths in his writings, which will stand the severest analysis; and yet few as they are, they are exactly those passages which his blind admirers would be most likely, and best able, to imitate. But

Wordsworth, where he is indeed Wordsworth, may be mimicked by copyists, he may be plundered by plagiarists; but he cannot be imitated except by those who are not born to be imitators. For without his depth of feeling and his imaginative power, his sense would want its vital warmth and peculiarity; and without his strong sense, his mysticism would become sickly—mere fog, and dimness!

To these defects which, as appears by the extracts, are only occasional, I may oppose with far less fear of encountering the dissent of any candid and intelligent reader, the following (for the most part correspondent) excellences. First, an austere purity of language both grammatically and logically; in short a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning. Of how high value I deem this, and how particularly estimable I hold the example at the present day, has been already stated: and in part too the reasons on which I ground both the moral and intellectual importance of habituating ourselves to a strict accuracy of expression. It is noticeable, how limited an acquaintance with the masterpieces of art will suffice to form a correct and even a sensitive taste, where none but masterpieces have been seen and admired: while on the other hand, the most correct notions, and the widest acquaintance with the works of excellence of all ages and countries, will not perfectly secure us against the contagious familiarity with the far more numerous offspring of tastelessness or of a perverted taste. If this be the case, as it notoriously is, with the arts of music and painting, much more difficult will it be, to avoid the infection of multiplied and daily examples in the practice of an art, which uses words, and words only, as its instruments. In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that *ultimatum* which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style, namely, its untranslatableness in words of the same language without injury to the meaning. Be it observed, however, that I include in the meaning of a word not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls. For language is framed to convey not the object alone, but likewise the character, mood and intentions of the person who is representing it. In poetry it is practicable to preserve the diction uncorrupted by the affectations and misappropriations, which promiscuous authorship, and reading not promiscuous only because it is disproportionately most conversant with the compositions of the day, have rendered general. Yet even to the poet, composing in his own

province, it is an arduous work: and as the result and pledge of a watchful good sense, of fine and luminous distinction, and of complete self-possession, may justly claim all the honour which belongs to an attainment equally difficult and valuable, and the more valuable for being rare. It is at all times the proper food of the understanding; but in an age of corrupt eloquence it is both food and antidote.

In prose I doubt whether it be even possible to preserve our style wholly unalloyed by the vicious phraseology which meets us everywhere, from the sermon to the newspaper, from the harangue of the legislator to the speech from the convivial chair, announcing a toast or sentiment. Our chains rattle, even while we are complaining of them. The poems of Boetius rise high in our estimation when we compare them with those of his contemporaries, as Sidonius Apollinaris, &c. They might even be referred to a purer age, but that the prose in which they are set, as jewels in a crown of lead or iron, betrays the true age of the writer. Much however may be effected by education. I believe not only from grounds of reason, but from having in great measure assured myself of the fact by actual though limited experience, that to a youth led from his first boyhood to investigate the meaning of every word and the reason of its choice and position, logic presents itself as an old acquaintance under new names.

On some future occasion, more especially demanding such disquisition, I shall attempt to prove the close connection between veracity and habits of mental accuracy; the beneficial after-effects of verbal precision in the preclusion of fanaticism, which masters the feelings more especially by indistinct watch-words; and to display the advantages which language alone, at least which language with incomparably greater ease and certainty than any other means, presents to the instructor of impressing modes of intellectual energy so constantly, so imperceptibly, and as it were by such elements and atoms, as to secure in due time the formation of a second nature. When we reflect, that the cultivation of the judgment is a positive command of the moral law, since the reason can give the principle alone, and the conscience bears witness only to the motive, while the application and effects must depend on the judgment: when we consider, that the greater part of our success and comfort in life depends on distinguishing the similar from the same, that which is peculiar in each thing from that which it has in common with others, so as still to select the most probable, instead of the merely possible or positively unfit, we shall learn to value earnestly and with a practical seriousness,

a mean, already prepared for us by nature and society, of teaching the young mind to think well and wisely by the same unremembered process and with the same never forgotten results, as those by which it is taught to speak and converse. Now how much warmer the interest is, how much more genial the feelings of reality and practicability, and thence how much stronger the impulses to imitation are, which a contemporary writer, and especially a contemporary poet, excites in youth and commencing manhood, has been treated of in the earlier pages of these sketches. I have only to add, that all the praise which is due to the exertion of such influence for a purpose so important, joined with that which must be claimed for the infrequency of the same excellence in the same perfection, belongs in full right to Mr. Wordsworth. I am far however from denying that we have poets whose general style possesses the same excellence, as Mr. Moore, Lord Byron, Mr. Bowles, and in all his later and more important works our laurel-honouring Laureate. But there are none, in whose works I do not appear to myself to find more exceptions than in those of Wordsworth. Quotations or specimens would here be wholly out of place, and must be left for the critic who doubts and would invalidate the justice of this eulogy so applied.

The second characteristic excellence of Mr. Wordsworth's works is: a correspondent weight and sanity of the thoughts and sentiments,—won, not from books, but, from the poet's own meditative observation. They are fresh, and have the dew upon them. His muse, at least when in her strength of wing, and when she hovers aloft in her proper element,

" Makes audible a linked lay of truth,  
Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,  
Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes !"

S. T. C.

Even throughout his smaller poems there is scarcely one, which is not rendered valuable by some just and original reflection.

See page 25, vol. ii. (Star Gazers): or the two following passages in one of his humblest compositions :

" O Reader ! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader ! you would find  
A tale in every thing."

and

" I have heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
With coldness still returning:  
Alas ! the gratitude of men  
Has oftener left me mourning."

SIMON LEE.

Or in a still higher strain the six beautiful quatrains, page 134 (The Fountain):

"Thus fares it still in our decay:  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

"The Blackbird in the summer trees,  
The Lark upon the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please,  
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do they wage  
A foolish strife: they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free!

"But we are pressed by heavy laws  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

"If there is one, who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth,  
The household hearts that were his own  
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone,  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me; but by none  
Am I enough beloved."

or the Sonnet on Buonaparte, page 202, vol. ii.; or finally (for a volume would scarce suffice to exhaust the instances), the last stanza of the poem on The Withered Celandine, vol. ii. p. 212

"To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,  
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!  
O man! that from thy fair and shining youth  
Age might but take the things youth needed not."

Both in respect of this and of the former excellence, Mr. Wordsworth strikingly resembles Samuel Daniel, one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethan age, now most causelessly neglected: Samuel Daniel, whose diction bears no mark of time, no distinction of age, which has been, and as long as our language shall last will be, so far the language of the to-day and for ever, as that it is more intelligible to us, than the transitory fashions of our own particular age. A similar praise is due to his sentiments. No frequency of perusal can deprive them of their freshness. For though they are brought into the full daylight of every reader's comprehension, yet are they drawn up from depths which few in any age are privileged to visit, into which few in any age have courage or inclination to descend. If Mr. Wordsworth is



not equally with Daniel alike intelligible to all readers of average understanding in all passages of his works, the comparative difficulty does not arise from the greater impurity of the ore, but from the nature and uses of the metal. A poem is not necessarily obscure, because it does not aim to be popular. It is enough, if a work be conspicuous to those for whom it is written, and

"Fit audience find, though few."

To the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood" the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

"Canzone, l'credo, che saranno radi  
Color che tua ragione intendan bene:  
Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto."

"O lyric song, there will be few, think I,  
Who may thy import understand aright:  
Thou art for *them* so arduous and so high!"

But the ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet cannot be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe, that Plato himself ever meant or taught it:

Πολλά δι' ὑπ' ἀγκῶ  
—νος ὠκεία βέλη  
Ἔνδον ἐντὶ φαρέτρας  
Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν ἔς  
Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἐρμηνέων  
Χαρίζει. Σοφὸς ὁ πολ-  
—λα εἰδὼς φύψ  
Μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι  
Παγγλωσσίq, κόρακες ὡς  
Ἄκραντα γαρεύετον  
Δίδς πρὸς ὀρνίχα θείον

Third (and wherein he soars far above Daniel) the sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs: the frequent *curiosa felicitas* of his diction, of which I need not here give specimens, having anticipated them in a preceding page. This beauty, and as eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's

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poetry, his rudest assailants have felt themselves compelled to acknowledge and admire.

Fourth; the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions as taken immediately from nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of nature. Like a green field reflected in a calm and perfectly transparent lake, the image is distinguished from the reality only by its greater softness and lustre. Like the moisture or the polish on a pebble, genius neither distorts nor false-colours its objects; but on the contrary brings out many a vein and many a tint, which escape the eye of common observation, thus raising to the rank of gems what had been often kicked away by the hurrying foot of the traveller on the dusty highroad of custom.

Let me refer to the whole description of skating, vol. i., page 42 to 47 (Influence of Natural Objects), especially to the lines

So through the darkness and the cold we flew,  
And not a voice was idle: with the din  
Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud;  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while the distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars  
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west  
The orange sky of evening died away."

Or to the poem on The Green Linnet, vol. i. p. 244. What can be more accurate yet more lovely than the two concluding stanzas?

"Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
Yet seeming still to hover,  
There! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings  
That cover him all over.  
While thus before my eyes he gleams,  
A brother of the leaves he seems:  
When in a moment forth he teems  
His little song in gushes:  
As if it pleased him to disdain  
And mock the form which he did feign,  
While he was dancing with the train  
Of leaves among the bushes."

Or the description of the blue-cap, and of the noontide silence, p. 284;\* or the poem to The Cuckoo, p. 299; or, lastly, though I

\* In the poem called "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves."

might multiply the references to ten times the number, to the poem so completely Wordsworth's commencing

"Three years she grew in sun and shower."

Fifth: a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man; the sympathy indeed of a contemplator, rather than a fellow-sufferer or co-mate (spectator, *haud particeps*), but of a contemplator, from whose view no difference of rank conceals the sameness of the nature; no injuries of wind or weather, of toil, or even of ignorance, wholly disguise the human face divine. The superscription and the image of the Creator still remain legible to him under the dark lines, with which guilt or calamity had cancelled or cross-barred it. Here the man and the poet lose and find themselves in each other, the one as glorified, the latter as substantiated. In this mild and philosophic pathos, Wordsworth appears to me without a compeer. Such he is: so he writes. See vol. i. page 134 to 136, "'Tis said that some have died for love," or that most affecting composition, the "Affliction of Margaret — of —," page 165 to 168, which no mother, and if I may judge by my own experience, no parent can read without a tear. Or turn to that genuine lyric, in the former edition, entitled, the "Mad Mother," page 174 to 178, of which I cannot refrain from quoting two of the stanzas, both of them for their pathos, and the former for the fine transition in the two concluding lines of the stanza, so expressive of that deranged state, in which from the increased sensibility the sufferer's attention is abruptly drawn off by every trifle, and in the same instant plucked back again by the one despotic thought, and bringing home with it, by the blending, fusing power of Imagination and Passion, the alien object to which it had been so abruptly diverted, no longer an alien but an ally and an inmate.

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!  
It cools my blood, it cools my brain:  
Thy lips, I feel them, baby! they  
Draw from my heart the pain away.  
Oh! press me with thy little hand;  
It loosens something at my chest;  
About that tight and deadly band  
I feel thy little fingers prest.  
The breeze I see is in the tree!  
It comes to cool my babe and me.  
Thy father cares not for my breast,  
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest,  
'Tis all thine own!—and, if its hue  
Be changed, that was so fair to view,

'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!  
 My beauty, little child, is flown,  
 But thou wilt live with me in love,  
 And what if my poor cheek be brown  
 'Tis well for me, thou canst not see  
 How pale and wan it else would be."

Lastly, and pre-eminently, I challenge for this poet the gift of Imagination in the highest and strictest sense of the word. In the play of fancy, Wordsworth, to my feelings, is not always graceful, and sometimes recondite. The likeness is occasionally too strange, or demands too peculiar a point of view, or is such as appears the creature of predetermined research, rather than spontaneous presentation. Indeed his fancy seldom displays itself as mere and unmodified fancy. But in imaginative power, he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton; and yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own. To employ his own words, which are at once an instance and an illustration, he does indeed to all thoughts and to all objects—

— "add the gleam,  
 The light that never was on sea or land,  
 The consecration, and the poet's dream."

*Elegiac Stanzas on a Picture of Peele Castle.*

I shall select a few examples as most obviously manifesting this faculty; but if I should ever be fortunate enough to render my analysis of imagination, its origin and characters, thoroughly intelligible to the reader, he will scarcely open on a page of this poet's works without recognizing, more or less, the presence and the influences of this faculty.

From the poem on the Yew Trees, vol. i. pages 303, 304:

"But worthier still of note  
 Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,  
 Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;  
 Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth  
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
 Up-colling, and inveterately convolved,—  
 Not uninformed with phantasy, and looks  
 That threaten the profane;—a pillared shade,  
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,  
 By sheddings from the pinal umbrage tinged  
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof  
 Of houghs, as if for festal purpose decked  
 With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes  
 May meet at noontide—Fear and trembling Hope,  
 Silence and Foresight—Death, the skeleton,  
 And Time, the shadow—there to celebrate,  
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er"

With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship ; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glanazzara's inmost caves."

The effect of the old man's figure in the poem of Resolution and Independence, vol. ii. page 33 :

"While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me :  
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
About the weary moors continually,  
Wandering about alone and silently."

Or the 8th, 9th, 19th, 26th, 31st, and 33rd, in the collection of Miscellaneous Sonnets—the Sonnet on the subjugation of Switzerland, page 210, or the last ode, from which I especially select the two following stanzas or paragraphs, page 349 to 350. (On the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood.)

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar.  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God who is our home :  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy ;  
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy !  
The youth who daily further from the east  
Must travel, still is nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended ;  
At length the man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day."

And page 352 to 354 of the same ode :

"O joy that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
'That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !  
The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
Perpetual benedictions : not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest ;  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—  
Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise ;

But for those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,  
 Fallings from us, vanishings;  
 Blank misgivings of a creature  
 Moving about in worlds not realized,  
 High instincts, before which our mortal nature  
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised !  
 But for those first affections,  
 Those shadowy recollections,  
 Which, be they what they may,  
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
 Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal silence; truths that wake  
 To perish never:  
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
 Nor man nor boy,  
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy  
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
 Hence, in a season of calm weather,  
 Though inland far we be,  
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
 Which brought us hither,  
 Can in a moment travel thither—  
 And see the children sport upon the shore,  
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.”

And since it would be unfair to conclude with an extract, which though highly characteristic, must yet from the nature of the thoughts and the subjects be interesting, or perhaps intelligible, to but a limited number of readers ; I will add from the poet's last published work a passage equally Wordsworthian ; of the beauty of which, and of the imaginative power displayed therein, there can be but one opinion, and one feeling (See *The White Doe*, age 5) :

“ Fast the church-yard fills ;—anon  
 Look again and they are gone ;  
 The cluster round the porch, and the folk  
 Who sate in the shade of the prior's oak !  
 And scarcely have they disappeared  
 Ere the prelude hymn is heard :  
 With one consent the people rejoice,  
 Filling the church with a lofty voice !  
 They sing a service which they feel  
 For 'tis the sun-rise of their zeal  
 And faith and hope are in their prime  
 In great Eliza's golden time.

“ A moment ends the fervent din  
 And all is hushed without and within ;  
 For though the priest more tranquilly  
 Recites the holy liturgy,  
 The only voice which you can hear  
 Is the river murmuring near.

When soft!—the dusky trees between  
 And down the path through the open green,  
 Where is no living thing to be seen ;  
 And through yon gateway, where is found,  
 Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
 Free entrance to the church-yard ground ;  
 And right across the verdant sod  
 Towards the very house of God ;  
 Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,  
 Comes gliding in serene and slow,  
 Soft and silent as a dream,  
 A solitary doe !  
 White she is as lily of June,  
 And beauteous as the silver moon  
 When out of sight the clouds are driven  
 And she is left alone in heaven !  
 Or like a ship some gentle day  
 In sunshine sailing far away —  
 A glittering ship that hath the plain  
 Of ocean for her own domain.

\* \* \* \* \*

What harmonious pensive changes  
 Wait upon her as she ranges  
 Round and round this pile of state  
 Overthrown and desolate !  
 Now a step or two her way  
 Is through space of open day,  
 Where the enamoured sunny light  
 Brightens her that was so bright :  
 Now doth a delicate shadow fall,  
 Falls upon her like a breath  
 From some lofty arch or wall,  
 As she passes underneath."

The following analogy will, I am apprehensive, appear dim and fantastic, but in reading Bartram's Travels I could not help transcribing the following lines as a sort of allegory, or connected simile and metaphor of Wordsworth's intellect and genius. "The soil is a deep, rich, dark mould, on a deep stratum of tenacious clay ; and that on a foundation of rocks, which often break through both strata, lifting their backs above the surface. The trees which chiefly grow here are the gigantic black oak ; magnolia grandiflora ; fraxinus excelsior ; platane ; and a few stately tulip trees." What Mr. Wordsworth will produce, it is not for me to prophesy : but I could pronounce with the liveliest convictions what he is capable of producing. It is the **FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM.**

The preceding criticism will not, I am aware, avail to overcome the prejudices of those who have made it a business to attack and ridicule Mr. Wordsworth's compositions.

Truth and prudence might be imaged as concentric circles. The poet may perhaps have passed beyond the latter, but he has

confined himself far within the bounds of the former, in designating these critics, as too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him;—"men of palsied imaginations, in whose minds all healthy action is languid;—who therefore, feel as the many direct them, or with the many are greedy after vicious provocatives."

Let not Mr. Wordsworth be charged with having expressed himself too indignantly, till the wantonness and the systematic and malignant perseverance of the aggressions have been taken into fair consideration. I myself heard the commander-in-chief of this unmanly warfare make a boast of his private admiration of Wordsworth's genius. I have heard him declare, that whoever came into his room would probably find the *Lyrical Ballads* lying open on his table, and that (speaking exclusively of those written by Mr. Wordsworth himself) he could nearly repeat the whole of them by heart. But a Review, in order to be a saleable article, must be personal, sharp, and pointed: and, since then, the poet has made himself, and with himself all who were, or were supposed to be, his friends and admirers, the object of the critic's revenge—how? by having spoken of a work so conducted in the terms which it deserved! I once heard a clergyman in boots and buckskin avow, that he would cheat his own father in a horse. A moral system of a similar nature seems to have been adopted by too many anonymous critics. As we used to say at school, in reviewing they make believe being rogues: and he who complains is to be laughed at for his ignorance of the game. With the pen out of their hand they are honourable men. They exert indeed power (which is to that of the injured party who should attempt to expose their glaring perversions and mis-statements, as twenty to one) to write down, and (where the author's circumstances permit) to impoverish the man, whose learning and genius they themselves in private have repeatedly admitted. They knowingly strive to make it impossible for the man even to publish \* any future work without exposing himself to all the wretchedness of debt and embarrassment. But this is all in their vocation: and bating what they do in their vocation, "who can say that black is the white of their eye?"

So much for the detractors from Wordsworth's merits. On the other hand, much as I might wish for their fuller sympathy, I

\* Not many months ago an eminent bookseller was asked what he thought of ———? The answer was: "I have heard his powers very highly spoken of by some of our first-rate men; but I would not have a work

of his if any one would give it me: for he is spoken but slightly of, or not at all, in the *Quarterly Review*: and the *Edinburgh*, you know, is decided to cut him up!"



dare not flatter myself, that the freedom with which I have declared my opinions concerning both his theory and his defects, most of which are more or less connected with his theory either as cause or effect, will be satisfactory or pleasing to all the poet's admirers and advocates. More indiscriminate than mine their admiration may be: deeper and more sincere it cannot be. But I have advanced no opinion either for praise or censure, other than as texts introductory to the reasons which compel me to form it. Above all, I was fully convinced that such a criticism was not only wanted; but that, if executed with adequate ability, it must conduce in no mean degree to Mr. Wordsworth's reputation. His fame belongs to another age, and can neither be accelerated nor retarded. How small the proportion of the defects are to the beauties, I have repeatedly declared; and that no one of them originates in deficiency of poetic genius. Had they been more and greater, I should still, as a friend to his literary character in the present age, consider an analytic display of them as pure gain; if only it removed, as surely to all reflecting minds even the foregoing analysis must have removed, the strange mistake so slightly grounded, yet so widely and industriously propagated, of Mr. Wordsworth's turn for simplicity! I am not half as much irritated by hearing his enemies abuse him for vulgarity of style, subject, and conception, as I am disgusted with the gilded side of the same meaning, as displayed by some affected admirers with whom he is, forsooth, "a sweet, simple poet!" and so natural, that little master Charles, and his younger sister, are so charmed with them, that they play at Goody Blake, or at Johnny and Betty Foy!

Were the collection of poems published with these biographical sketches, important enough (which I am not vain enough to believe) to deserve such a distinction: even as I have done, so would I be done unto.

For more than eighteen months have the volume of Poems, entitled *SIBYLLINE LEAVES*, and the present volumes up to this page, been printed and ready for publication. But ere I speak of myself in the tones, which are alone natural to me under the circumstances of late years, I would fain present myself to the reader as I was in the first dawn of my literary life:

"When Hope grew round me, like the climbing vine,  
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seem'd mine!"

For this purpose I have selected from the letters which I wrote home from Germany, those which appeared likely to be most interesting, and at the same time most pertinent to the title of this work.

## SATYRANE'S LETTERS.

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### LETTER I.

ON Sunday morning, September 16, 1798, the Hamburg Packet set sail from Yarmouth: and I, for the first time in my life, beheld my native land retiring from me. At the moment of its disappearance—in all the kirks, churches, chapels, and meeting-houses, in which the greater number, I hope, of my countrymen were at that time assembled, I will dare question whether there was one more ardent prayer offered up to heaven, than that which I then preferred for my country. Now then (said I to a gentleman who was standing near me) we are out of our country. Not yet, not yet! he replied, and pointed to the sea; “This, too, is a Briton’s country.” This *bon mot* gave a fillip to my spirits, I rose and looked around on my fellow-passengers, who were all on the deck. We were eighteen in number, videlicet, five Englishmen, an English lady, a French gentleman and his servant, an Hanoverian and his servant, a Prussian, a Swede, two Danes, and a Mulatto boy, a German tailor and his wife (the smallest couple I ever beheld) and a Jew. We were all on the deck; but in a short time I observed marks of dismay. The lady retired to the cabin in some confusion, and many of the faces round me assumed a very doleful and frog-coloured appearance; and within an hour the number of those on deck was lessened by one half. I was giddy, but not sick, and the giddiness soon went away, but left a feverishness and want of appetite, which I attributed, in great measure, to the *sæva Mephitis* of the bilge-water; and it was certainly not decreased by the exportations from the cabin. However, I was well enough to join the able-bodied passengers, one of whom observed not inaptly, that Momus might have discovered an easier way to see a man’s inside, than by placing a window in his breast. He needed only have taken a salt-water trip in a packet-boat.

I am inclined to believe that a packet is far superior to a stage-coach, as a means of making men open out to each other. In the

latter the uniformity of posture disposes to dozing, and the definitiveness of the period at which the company will separate, makes each individual think more of those to whom he is going, than of those with whom he is going. But at sea, more curiosity is excited, if only on this account, that the pleasant or unpleasant qualities of your companions are of greater importance to you, from the uncertainty how long you may be obliged to house with them. Besides, if you are countrymen, that now begins to form a distinction and a bond of brotherhood; and if of different countries, there are new incitements of conversation, more to ask and more to communicate. I found that I had interested the Danes in no common degree. I had crept into the boat on the deck and fallen asleep; but was awaked by one of them about three o'clock in the afternoon, who told me that they had been seeking me in every hole and corner, and insisted that I should join their party and drink with them. He talked English with such fluency, as left me wholly unable to account for the singular and even ludicrous incorrectness with which he spoke it. I went, and found some excellent wines and a dessert of grapes with a pine apple. The Danes had christened me Doctor Teology, and dressed as I was all in black, with large shoes and black worsted stockings, I might certainly have passed very well for a Methodist missionary. However I disclaimed my title. What then may you be? A man of fortune? No!—A merchant? No!—A merchant's traveller? No!—A clerk? No!—*Un Philosophe*, perhaps? It was at that time in my life, in which of all possible names and characters I had the greatest disgust to that of *un Philosophe*. But I was weary of being questioned, and rather than be nothing, or at best only the abstract idea of a man, I submitted by a bow, even to the aspersion implied in the word *un Philosophe*. The Dane then informed me, that all in the present party were philosophers likewise. Certes we were not of the stoic school. For we drank and talked and sung, till we talked and sung all together; and then we rose and danced on the deck a set of dances, which in one sense of the word at least, were very intelligibly and appropriately entitled reels. The passengers who lay in the cabin below in all the agonies of sea-sickness, must have found our bacchanalian merriment

"a tune  
Harsh and of dissonant mood from their complaint."

I thought so at the time; and (by way, I suppose, of supporting my newly assumed philosophical character) I thought, too, how closely the greater number of our virtues are connected with the

fear of death, and how little sympathy we bestow on pain, where there is no danger.

The two Danes were brothers. The one was a man with a clear white complexion, white hair, and white eyebrows, looked silly, and nothing that he uttered gave the lie to his looks. The other, whom, by way of eminence I have called the Dane, had likewise white hair, but was much shorter than his brother, with slender limbs, and a very thin face slightly pock-fretten. This man convinced me of the justice of an old remark, that many a faithful portrait in our novels and farces has been rashly censured for an outrageous caricature, or perhaps nonentity. I had retired to my station in the boat—he came and seated himself by my side, and appeared not a little tipsy. He commenced the conversation in the most magnificent style, and as a sort of pioneering to his own vanity, he flattered me with such grossness! The parasites of the old comedy were modest in the comparison. His language and accentuation were so exceedingly singular, that I determined, for once in my life to take notes of a conversation. Here it follows, somewhat abridged indeed, but in all other respects as accurately as my memory permitted.

THE DANE. Vat imagination! vat language! vat vast science! and vat eyes! vat a milk-wite forehead!—O my heafen! vy, you're a Got!

ANSWER. You do me too much honour, sir.

THE DANE. O me! if you should dink I is flattering you!—No, no, no! I haf ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand pound a year! Vell—and vat is dhat? a mere trifle! I 'ouldn't gif my sincere heart for ten times dhe money. —Yes, you're a Got! I a mere man! But, my dear friend! dhink of me, as a man! Is, is—I mean to ask you now, my dear friend—is I not very eloquent? Is I not speak English very fine?

ANSWER. Most admirably! Believe me, sir! I have seldom heard even a native talk so *fluently*.

THE DANE. (*Squeezing my hand with great vehemence.*) My dear friend! vat an affection and fidelity ve have for each odher! But tell me, do tell me,—Is I not, now and den, speak some fault? Is I not in some wrong?

ANSWER. Why, sir! perhaps it might be observed by nice critics in the English language, that you occasionally use the word "Is" instead of "am." In our best companies we generally say I am, and not I is or I'se. Excuse me, sir! it is a mere trifle.

THE DANE. O!—is, is, am, am, am. Yes, yes—I know, I know

ANSWER. I am, thou art, he is, we are, ye are, they are.

THE DANE. Yes, yes—I know, I know—Am, am, am, is dhe presens, and Is is dhe perfectum—yes, yes—and are is dhe plusquam perfectum.

ANSWER. And “art,” sir! is——

THE DANE. My dear friend! it is dhe plusquam perfectum, no, no—dhat is a great lie. “Are” is dhe plusquam perfectum—and “art” is dhe plusquam plueperfectum—(*then swinging my hand to and fro, and cocking his little bright hazle eyes at me, that danced with vanity and wine*)—you see, my dear friend! that I too have some lehrning.

ANSWER. Learning, sir? Who dares suspect it? Who can listen to you for a minute, who can even look at you, without perceiving the extent of it?

THE DANE. My dear friend!—(*then with a would-be humble look, and in a tone of voice as if he was reasoning*), I could not talk so of prosens and imperfectum, and futurum and plusquam plueperfectum, and all dhat, my dear friend! without some lehrning?

ANSWER. Sir! a man like you cannot talk on any subject without discovering the depth of his information.

THE DANE. Dhe grammatic Greek, my friend! ha! ha! ha! (*laughing, and swinging my hand to and fro—then with a sudden transition to great solemnity*), now I will tell you, my dear friend! Dhere did happen about me vat de whole historia of Denmark record no instance about nobody else. Dhe bishop did ask me all dhe questions about all dhe religion in dhe Latin grammar.

ANSWER. The grammar, sir? The language, I presume——

THE DANE. (*A little offended.*) Grammar is language, and language is grammar——

ANSWER. Ten thousand pardons!

THE DANE. Vell, and I was only fourteen years——

ANSWER. Only fourteen years old?

THE DANE. No more. I vas fourteen years old—and he asked me all questions, religion and philosophy, and all in dhe Latin language—and I answered him all every one, my dear friend! all in dhe Latin language.

ANSWER. A prodigy! an absolute prodigy!

THE DANE. No, no, no! he was a bishop, a great superintendant.

ANSWER. Yes! a bishop.

THE DANE. A bishop—not a mere predicator, not a prediger——

ANSWER. My dear sir! we have misunderstood each other. I said that your answering in Latin at so early an age was a

prodigy, that is a thing that is wonderful, that does not often happen.

THE DANE. Often! Dhere is not von instance recorded in dhe whole historia of Denmark.

ANSWER. And since then, sir——?

THE DANE. I was sent ofer to dhe Vest Indies—to our island, and dhere I had no more to do vid books. No! no! I put my genius anodher way—and I haf made ten tousand pound a year. Is not dhat *ghenius*, my dear friend!—But vat is money! I dthink the poorest man alive my equal. Yes, my dear friend! my little fortune is pleasant to my generous heart, because I can do good—no man with so little a fortune ever did so much generosity—no person, no man person, no woman person, ever denies it. But we are all Got's children.

Here the Hanoverian interrupted him, and the other Dane, the Swede, and the Prussian, joined us, together with a young Englishman who spoke the German fluently, and interpreted to me many of the Prussian's jokes. The Prussian was a travelling merchant, turned of threescore, a hale man, tall, strong, and stout, full of stories, gesticulations, and buffoonery, with the soul as well as the look of a mountebank, who, while he is making you laugh, picks your pocket. Amid all his droll looks and droll gestures, there remained one look untouched by laughter; and that one look was the true face, the others were but its mask. The Hanoverian was a pale, fat, bloated young man, whose father had made a large fortune in London, as an army-contractor. He seemed to emulate the manners of young Englishmen of fortune. He was a good-natured fellow, not without information or literature; but a most egregious coxcomb. He had been in the habit of attending the House of Commons, and had once spoken, as he informed me, with great applause in a debating society. For this he appeared to have qualified himself with laudable industry: for he was perfect in "Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary," and with an accent which forcibly reminded me of the Scotchman in "Roderic Random," who professed to teach the English pronunciation, he was constantly *deferring* to my superior judgment, whether or no I had pronounced this or that word with propriety, or "the true delicacy." When he spoke, though it were only half a dozen sentences, he always rose; for which I could detect no other motive, than his partiality to that elegant phrase so liberally introduced in the orations of our British legislators, "While I am on my legs." The Swede, whom for reasons that will soon appear, I shall distinguish by the name of "Nobility," was a

strong-featured, scurvy-faced man, his complexion resembling, in colour, a red-hot poker beginning to cool. He appeared miserably dependent on the Dane; but was however incomparably the best informed and most rational of the party. Indeed his manners and conversation discovered him to be both a man of the world and a gentleman. The Jew was in the hold: the French gentleman was lying on the deck so ill that I could observe nothing concerning him, except the affectionate attentions of his servant to him. The poor fellow was very sick himself, and every now and then ran to the side of the vessel, still keeping his eye on his master, but returned in a moment and seated himself again by him, now supporting his head, now wiping his forehead and talking to him all the while in the most soothing tones. There had been a matrimonial squabble of a very ludicrous kind in the cabin, between the little German tailor and his little wife. He had secured two beds, one for himself and one for her. This had struck the little woman as a very cruel action; she insisted upon their having but one, and assured the mate in the most piteous tones, that she was his lawful wife. The mate and the cabin-boy decided in her favour, abused the little man for his want of tenderness with much humour, and hoisted him into the same compartment with his sea-sick wife. This quarrel was interesting to me, as it procured me a bed, which I otherwise should not have had.

In the evening, at 7 o'clock, the sea rolled higher, and the Dane, by means of the greater agitation, eliminated enough of what he had been swallowing to make room for a great deal more. His favourite potation was sugar and brandy, *i.e.*, a very little warm water with a large quantity of brandy, sugar, and nutmeg. His servant boy, a black-eyed Mulatto, had a good-natured round face, exactly the colour of the skin of the walnut-kernel. The Dane and I were again seated, *tête-à-tête*, in the ship's boat. The conversation, which was now indeed rather an oration than a dialogue, became extravagant beyond all that I ever heard. He told me that he had made a large fortune in the island of Santa Cruz, and was now returning to Denmark to enjoy it. He expatiated on the style in which he meant to live, and the great undertakings which he proposed to himself to commence, till the brandy aiding his vanity, and his vanity and garrulity aiding the brandy, he talked like a madman—entreated me to accompany him to Denmark—there I should see his influence with the government, and he would introduce me to the king, &c. &c. Thus he went on dreaming aloud, and then passing with a very lyrical transition to the subject of general politics, he declaimed, like a member of

the Corresponding Society, *about* (not concerning) the Rights of Man, and assured me that notwithstanding his fortune, he thought the poorest man alive his equal.—All are equal, my dear friend! all are equal! We are all Got's children. The poorest man haf the same rights with me. Jack! Jack! some more sugar and brandy. Dhere is dhat fellow now! He is a Mulatto—but he is my equal.—That's right, Jack! (*taking the sugar and brandy.*) Here, you sir! shake hands with dhis gentleman! Shake hands with me, you dog! Dhere, dhere!—We are all equal, my dear friend!—Do I not speak like Socrates, and Plato, and Cato—they were all philosophers, my dear *philosophe*! all very great men!—and so was Homer and Virgil—but they were poets, yes yes! I know all about it!—But what can anybody say mor than this? we are all equal, all Got's children. I haf ten tousand a year, but I am no more dhan the meanest man alive. I haf n pride; and yet, my dear friend! I can say, do! and it is done. Ha! ha! ha! my dear friend! Now dhere is dhat gentleman. (*pointing to "Nobility"*) he is a Swedish baron—you shall see. Ho! (*calling to the Swede*), get me, will you, a bottle of wine from the cabin.

SWEDE. Here, Jack! go and get your master a bottle of win from the cabin.

DANE. No, no, no! do *you* go now—you go yourself—you go now!

SWEDE. Pah!

DANE. Now go! Go, I pray you. *And the Swede went!!*

After this the Dane commenced an harangue on religion, and mistaking me for *un philosophe* in the continental sense of the word, he talked of Deity in a declamatory style, very much resembling the devotional rants of that rude blunderer, Mr. Thomas Paine, in his Age of Reason, and whispered in my ear, what damned *hypocrism* all Jesus Christ's business was. I dare aver, that few mei have less reason to charge themselves with indulging in *persiflage* than myself. I should hate it, if it were only that it is a Frenchman's vice, and feel a pride in avoiding it because our own language is too honest to have a word to express it by. But in this instance the temptation had been too powerful, and I have placed it on the list of my offences. Pericles answered one of his dearest friends, who had solicited him on a case of life and death to take an equivocal oath for his preservation: *Debeo amicis opitulari, sed usque ad Deos.\** Friendship herself must place her last and boldest step on this side the altar. What Pericles would not do to save a

\* Translation. It behoves me to side with my friends but only as far as the gods.



friend's life, you may be assured I would not hazard merely to mill the chocolate-pot of a drunken fool's vanity till it frothed over. Assuming a serious look, I professed myself a believer, and sunk at once a hundred fathoms in his good graces. He retired to his cabin, and I wrapped myself up in my great coat, and looked at the water. A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentarily intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness.

It was cold, the cabin was at open war with my olfactories, and I found reason to rejoice in my great coat, a weighty, high-caped, respectable rug, the collar of which turned over, and played the part of a night-cap very passably. In looking up at two or three bright stars, which oscillated with the motion of the sails, I fell asleep, but was awakened at one o'clock, Monday morning, by a shower of rain. I found myself compelled to go down into the cabin, where I slept very soundly, and awoke with a very good appetite at breakfast time, my nostrils, the most placable of all the senses, reconciled to or indeed insensible of the *mephitis*.

Monday, September 17th, I had a long conversation with the Swede, who spoke with the most poignant contempt of the Dane, whom he described as a fool, purse-mad; but he confirmed the boasts of the Dane respecting the largeness of his fortune, which he had acquired in the first instance as an advocate, and afterwards as a planter. From the Dane and from himself I collected that he was indeed a Swedish nobleman, who had squandered a fortune, that was never very large, and had made over his property to the Dane, on whom he was now utterly dependent. He seemed to suffer very little pain from the Dane's insolence. He was in a high degree humane and attentive to the English lady, who suffered most fearfully, and for whom he performed many little offices with a tenderness and delicacy which seemed to prove real goodness of heart. Indeed, his general manners and conversation were not only pleasing, but even interesting; and I struggled to believe his insensibility respecting the Dane philosophical fortitude. For though the Dane was now quite sober, his character oozed out of him at every pore. And after dinner, when he was again flushed with wine, every quarter of an hour or perhaps oftener he would shout out to the Swede, "Ho! Nobility, go—do such a thing! Mr. Nobility!—tell the gentlemen such a story, and so forth,"

with an insolence which must have excited disgust and detestation, if his vulgar rants on the sacred rights of equality, joined to his wild havoc of general grammar, no less than of the English language, had not rendered it so irresistibly laughable.

At four o'clock I observed a wild duck swimming on the waves, a single solitary wild duck. It is not easy to conceive how interesting a thing it looked in that round objectless desert of waters. I had associated such a feeling of immensity with the ocean, that I felt exceedingly disappointed, when I was out of sight of all land, at the narrowness and nearness, as it were, of the circle of the horizon. So little are images capable of satisfying the obscure feelings connected with words. In the evening the sails were lowered, lest we should run foul of the land, which can be seen only at a small distance. And at four o'clock, on Tuesday morning, I was awakened by the cry of land! land! It was an ugly island rock at a distance on our left, called Heiligeland, well known to many passengers from Yarmouth to Hamburg, who have been obliged by stormy weather to pass weeks and weeks in weary captivity on it, stripped of all their money by the exorbitant demands of the wretches who inhabit it. So at least the sailors informed me. About nine o'clock we saw the main land, which seemed scarcely able to hold its head above water, low, flat, and dreary, with light-houses and land-marks which seemed to give a character and language to the dreariness. We entered the mouth of the Elbe, passing Neu-werk; though as yet the right bank only of the river was visible to us. On this I saw a church, and thanked God for my safe voyage, not without affectionate thoughts of those I had left in England. At eleven o'clock on the same morning we arrived at Cuxhaven, the ship dropped anchor, and the boat was hoisted out to carry the Hanoverian and a few others on shore. The captain agreed to take us, who remained, to Hamburg for ten guineas, to which the Dane contributed so largely, that the other passengers paid but half a guinea each. Accordingly we hauled anchor, and passed gently up the river. At Cuxhaven both sides of the river may be seen in clear weather; we could now see the right bank only. We passed a multitude of English traders that had been waiting many weeks for a wind. In a short time both banks became visible, both flat and evidencing the labour of human hands by their extreme neatness. On the left bank I saw a church or two in the distance; on the right bank we passed by steeple and windmill and cottage, and windmill and single house, windmill and windmill, and neat single house, and steeple. These were the objects and in the succession. The shores were very

green and planted with trees not inelegantly. Thirty-five miles from Cuxhaven the night came on us, and as the navigation of the Elbe is perilous, we dropped anchor.

Over what place, thought I, does the moon hang to *your* eye, my dearest friend? To me it hung over the left bank of the Elbe. Close above the moon was a huge volume of deep black cloud, while a very thin fillet crossed the middle of the orb, as narrow and thin and black as a ribbon of crape. The long trembling road of moonlight, which lay on the water and reached to the stern of our vessel, glimmered dimly and obscurely. We saw two or three lights from the right bank, probably from bed-rooms. I felt the striking contrast between the silence of this majestic stream, whose banks are populous with men and women and children, and flocks and herds—between the silence by night of this peopled river, and the ceaseless noise, and uproar, and loud agitations of the desolate solitude of the ocean. The passengers below had all retired to their beds; and I felt the interest of this quiet scene the more deeply from the circumstance of having just quitted them. For the Prussian had during the whole of the evening displayed all his talents to captivate the Dane, who had admitted him into the train of his dependents. The young Englishman continued to interpret the Prussian's jokes to me. They were all without exception profane and abominable, but some sufficiently witty, and a few incidents, which he related in his own person, were valuable as illustrating the manners of the countries in which they had taken place.

Five o'clock on Wednesday morning we hauled the anchor, but were soon obliged to drop it again in consequence of a thick fog, which our captain feared would continue the whole day; but about nine it cleared off, and we sailed slowly along, close by the shore of a very beautiful island, forty miles from Cuxhaven, the wind continuing slack. This holme or island is about a mile and a half in length, wedge-shaped, well wooded, with glades of the liveliest green, and rendered more interesting by the remarkably neat farmhouse on it. It seemed made for retirement without solitude—a place that would allure one's friends while it precluded the impertinent calls of mere visitors. The shores of the Elbe now became more beautiful, with rich meadows and trees running like a low wall along the river's edge, and peering over them, neat houses and (especially on the right bank) a profusion of steeple-spires, white, black, or red. An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeples, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger

to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sun-set, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heaven-ward. I remember once, and once only, to have seen a spire in a narrow valley of a mountainous country. The effect was not only mean but ludicrous, and reminded me against my will of an *extinguisher*; the close neighbourhood of the high mountain, at the foot of which it stood, had so completely dwarfed it, and deprived it of all connection with the sky or clouds. Forty-six English miles from Cuxhaven, and sixteen from Hamburg, the Danish village Veder ornaments the left bank with its black steeple, and close by it the wild and pastoral hamlet of Schulau. Hitherto both the right and left bank, green to the very brink, and level with the river, resembled the shores of a park canal. The trees and houses were alike low, sometimes the low trees overtopping the yet lower houses, sometimes the low houses rising above the yet lower trees. But at Schulau the left bank rises at once forty or fifty feet, and stares on the river with its perpendicular façade of sand, thinly patched with tufts of green. The Elbe continued to present a more and more lively spectacle from the multitude of fishing boats and the flocks of sea gulls wheeling round them, the clamorous rivals and companions of the fishermen; till we came to Blankaness, a most interesting village scattered amid scattered trees, over three hills in three divisions. Each of the three hills stares upon the river, with faces of bare sand, with which the boats with their bare poles, standing in files along the banks, made a sort of fantastic harmony. Between each façade lies a green and woody dell, each deeper than the other. In short it is a large village made up of individual cottages, each cottage in the centre of its own little wood or orchard, and each with its own separate path: a village with a labyrinth of paths, or rather a *neighbourhood* of houses! It is inhabited by fishermen and boat-makers, the Blankanese boats being in great request through the whole navigation of the Elbe. Here first we saw the spires of Hamburg, and from hence as far as Altona the left bank of the Elbe is uncommonly pleasing, considered as the vicinity of an industrious and republican city—in that style of beauty, or rather prettiness, that might tempt the citizen into the country, and yet gratify the taste which he had acquired in the town. Summer-houses and Chinese show-work are everywhere scattered along the high and green banks; the boards of the farm-houses left unplastered and gaily painted with green and yellow; and scarcely a tree not cut into shapes and made to remind the human being of his own power and intelligence instead of the

wisdom of nature. Still, however, these are links of connection between town and country, and far better than the affectation of tastes and enjoyments for which men's habits have disqualified them. Pass them by on Saturdays and Sundays with the burghers of Hamburg smoking their pipes, the women and children feasting in the alcoves of box and yew, and it becomes a nature of its own. On Wednesday, four o'clock, we left the vessel, and passing with trouble through the huge masses of shipping that seemed to choke the wide Elbe from Altona upward, we were at length landed at the Boom House, Hamburg.



LETTER II. (To a Lady.)

RATZBURG.

*Meine liebe Freundin.*

See how natural the German comes from me, though I have not yet been six weeks in the country!—almost as fluently as English from my neighbour the Amtsschreiber (or public secretary) who so often as we meet, though it should be half a dozen times in the same day, never fails to greet me with—“\*\* *ddam your plook unt eyes, my dearest Englander! vhee goes it!*”—which is certainly a proof of great generosity on his part, these words being his whole stock of English. I had, however, a better reason than the desire of displaying my proficiency: for I wished to put you in good humour with a language, from the acquirement of which I have promised myself much edification and the means too of communicating a new pleasure to you and your sister, during our winter readings. And how can I do this better than by pointing out its gallant attention to the ladies? Our English affix, *ess*, is, I believe, confined either to words derived from the Latin, as *actress*, *directress*, &c. or from the French, as *mistress*, *duchess*, and the like. But the German, *inn*, enables us to designate the sex in every possible relation of life. Thus the Amtmann's lady is the Frau Amtmanninn—the secretary's wife (by-the-by the handsomest woman I have yet seen in Germany) is die allerliebste Frau Amtsschreiberinn—the colonel's lady, die Frau Obristinn or Colonellinn—and even the parson's wife, die frau pastorinn. But I am especially pleased with their *freundinn*, which, unlike the *amica* of the Romans, is seldom used but in its best and purest sense. Now, I know, it will be said, that a friend is already something more than a friend, when a man feels an

anxiety to express to himself that this friend is a female; but this I deny—in that sense at least in which the objection will be made. I would hazard the impeachment of heresy, rather than abandon my belief that there is a sex in our souls as well as in their perishable garments; and he who does not feel it, never truly loved a sister—nay, is not capable even of loving a wife as she deserves to be loved, if she indeed be worthy of that holy name.

Now I know, my gentle friend, what you are murmuring to yourself—"This is so like him! running away after the first bubble, that chance has blown off from the surface of his fancy; when one is anxious to learn where he is and what he has seen." Well then! that I am settled at Ratzeburg, with my motives and the particulars of my journey hither, — will inform you. My first letter to him, with which doubtless he has edified your whole fireside, left me safely landed at Hamburg on the Elbe Stairs, at the Boom House. While standing on the stairs, I was amused by the contents of the passage boat which crosses the river once or twice a day from Hamburg to Haarbùrg. It was stowed close with all people of all nations, in all sorts of dresses; the men all with pipes in their mouths, and these pipes of all shapes and fancies—straight and wreathed, simple and complex, long and short, cane, clay, porcelain, wood, tin, silver, and ivory; most of them with silver chains and silver bowl-covers. Pipes and boots are the first universal characteristic of the male Hamburgers that would strike the eye of a raw traveller. But I forget my promise of journalizing as much as possible.—Therefore, *Sept. 19th, Afternoon.* My companion who, you recollect, speaks the French language with unusual propriety, had formed a kind of confidential acquaintance with the emigrant, who appeared to be a man of sense, and whose manners were those of a perfect gentleman. He seemed about fifty or rather more. Whatever is unpleasant in French manners from excess in the *degree*, had been softened down by age or affliction; and all that is delightful in the *kind*, alacrity and delicacy in little attentions, &c. remained, and without bustle, gesticulation, or disproportionate eagerness. His demeanour exhibited the minute philanthropy of a polished Frenchman, tempered by the sobriety of the English character disunited from its reserve. There is something strangely attractive in the character of a *gentleman* when you apply the word emphatically, and yet in that sense of the term which it is more easy to *feel* than to define. It neither includes the possession of high moral excellence, nor of necessity even the ornamental graces

of manner. I have now in my mind's eye a person whose life would scarcely stand scrutiny even in the court of honour, much less in that of conscience; and his manners, if nicely observed, would of the two excite an idea of awkwardness rather than of elegance: and yet every one who conversed with him felt and acknowledged *the gentleman*. The secret of the matter, I believe to be this—we feel the gentlemanly character present to us, whenever under all the circumstances of social intercourse, the trivial not less than the important, through the whole *detail* of his manners and deportment, and with the ease of a habit, a person shows respect to others in such a way as at the same time implies in his own feelings an habitual and assured anticipation of reciprocal respect from them to himself. In short, the *gentlemanly* character arises out of the feeling of equality acting as a habit, yet flexible to the varieties of rank, and modified without being disturbed or superseded by them. This description will perhaps explain to you the ground of one of your own remarks, as I was Englishing to you the interesting dialogue concerning the causes of the corruption of eloquence. “What perfect gentlemen these old Romans must have been! I was impressed, I remember, with the same feeling at the time I was reading a translation of Cicero's philosophical dialogues and of his epistolary correspondence: while in Pliny's letters I seemed to have a different feeling—he gave me the notion of a very *fine* gentleman.”—You uttered the words as if you had felt that the adjunct had injured the substance and the increased degree altered the kind. Pliny was the courtier of an absolute monarch—Cicero an aristocratic republican. For this reason the character of gentleman, in the sense to which I have confined it, is frequent in England, rare in France, and found, where it is found, in age or the latest period of manhood; while in Germany the character is almost unknown. But the proper *antipode* of a gentleman is to be sought for among the Anglo-American democrats.

I owe this digression, as an act of justice, to this amiable Frenchman, and of humiliation for myself. For in a little controversy between us on the subject of French poetry, he made me feel my own ill behaviour by the silent reproof of contrast, and when I afterwards apologized to him for the warmth of my language, he answered me with a cheerful expression of surprise, and an immediate compliment, which a gentleman might both make with dignity and receive with pleasure. I was pleased, therefore, to find it agreed on that we should, if possible, take up our quarters in the same house. My friend went with him in

search of an hotel, and I to deliver my letters of recommendation.

I walked onwards at a brisk pace, enlivened not so much by anything I actually saw, as by the confused sense that I was for the first time in my life on the *continent* of our planet. I seemed to myself like a liberated bird that had been hatched in an aviary, who now after his first soar of freedom poises himself in the upper air. Very naturally I began to wonder at *all* things, some for being so like and some for being so unlike the things in England—Dutch women with large umbrella hats shooting out half a yard before them, with a prodigal plumpness of petticoat behind—the women of Hamburg with caps plaited on the caul with silver or gold, or both, bordered round with stiffened lace, which *stood out* before their eyes, but not lower, so that the eyes sparkled through it—the Hanoverian women with the fore part of the head bare, then a stiff lace standing up like a wall perpendicular on the cap, and the cap behind *tailed* with an enormous quantity of ribbon which lies or tosses on the back:

"Their visnomies seem'd like a goodly banner  
Spread in defiance of all enemies."

SPENSER.

—The ladies all in English dresses, all *rouged*, and all with bad teeth: which you notice instantly from their contrast to the almost *animal*, too glossy mother-of-pearl whiteness and the regularity of the teeth of the laughing, loud-talking countrywomen and servant girls, who with their clean white stockings, and with slippers without heel-quarters, tripped along the dirty streets, as if they were secured by a charm from the dirt: with a lightness too, which surprised me, who had always considered it as one of the annoyances of sleeping in an inn that I had to clatter upstairs in a pair of them. The streets narrow; to my English nose sufficiently offensive, and explaining at first sight the universal use of boots; without any appropriate path for the foot-passengers; the gable ends of the houses all towards the street, some in the ordinary triangular form and *entire* as the botanists say, but the greater number notched and scalloped with more than Chinese grotesqueness. Above all, I was struck with the profusion of windows, so large and so many, that the houses look all glass. Mr. Pitt's window tax, with its pretty little *additional*s sprouting out from it like young toadlets on the back of a Surinam toad, would certainly improve the appearance of the Hamburg houses, which have a slight summer look, not in keeping with their size, incongruous with the climate, and precluding that feeling of re-



tirement and self-content, which one wishes to associate with a house in a noisy city. But a conflagration would, I fear, be the previous requisite to the production of any architectural beauty in Hamburg: for verily it is a filthy town. I moved on and crossed a multitude of ugly bridges, with huge black deformities of water wheels close by them. The water intersects the city everywhere, and would have furnished to the genius of Italy the capabilities of all that is most beautiful and magnificent in architecture. It might have been the rival of Venice, and it is huddle and ugliness, stench and stagnation. The *Jungfer Stieg*, (i.e., Young Ladies' Walk) to which my letters directed me, made an exception. It is a walk or promenade planted with treble rows of elm-trees, which being yearly pruned and cropped, remain slim and dwarf-like. This walk occupies one side of a square piece of water, with many swans on it perfectly tame, and moving among the swans showy pleasure boats with ladies in them, rowed by their husbands or lovers.\* \* \* \* \*

*(Some paragraphs have been here omitted.)*

\* \* thus embarrassed by sad and solemn politeness still more than by broken English, it sounded like the voice of an old friend when I heard the emigrant's servant inquiring after me. He had come for the purpose of guiding me to our hotel. Through streets and streets I pressed on as happy as a child, and, I doubt not, with a childish expression of wonderment in my busy eyes, amused by the wicker waggons with moveable benches across them, one behind the other (these were the hackney coaches); amused by the sign-boards of the shops, on which all the articles sold within are painted, and that too very exactly, though in a grotesque confusion (a useful substitute for language in this great mart of nations) amused with the incessant tinkling of the shop and house door bells, the bell hanging over each door and struck with a small iron rod at every entrance and exit;—and finally, amused by looking in at the windows as I passed along; the ladies and gentlemen drinking coffee or playing cards, and the gentlemen all smoking. I wished myself a painter, that I might have sent you a sketch of one of the card parties. The long pipe of one gentleman rested on the table, its bowl half a yard from his mouth, fuming like a censer by the fish pool—the other gentleman, who was dealing the cards, and of course had both hands employed, held his pipe in his teeth, which hanging down between his knees, smoked beside his ankles. Hogarth himself never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effort occasioned: nor was there

wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius!) neither acts, nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred.

Our hotel *Die Wilde Man* (the sign of which was no bad likeness of the landlord, who had engrafted on a very grim face a restless grin, that was at every man's service, and which indeed, like an actor rehearsing to himself, he kept playing in expectation of an occasion for it)—neither our hotel, I say, nor its landlord were of the genteel class. But it has one great advantage for a stranger, by being in the market-place, and the next neighbour of the huge church of St. Nicholas: a church with shops and houses built up against it, out of which *wens* and *warts* its high massy steeple rises, *necklaced* near the top with a round of large gilt balls. A better pole-star could scarcely be desired. Long shall I retain the impression made on my mind by the awful echo, so loud and long and tremulous, of the deep-toned clock within this church, which awoke me at two in the morning from a distressful dream, occasioned, I believe, by the feather bed, which is used here instead of bed clothes. I will rather carry my blanket about with me like a wild Indian, than submit to this abominable custom. Our emigrant acquaintance was, we found, an intimate friend of the celebrated Abbe de Lisle: and from the large fortune which he possessed under the monarchy, had rescued sufficient not only for independence, but for respectability. He had offended some of his fellow-emigrants in London, whom he had obliged with considerable sums, by a refusal to make further advances, and in consequence of their intrigues had received an order to quit the kingdom. I thought it one proof of his innocence, that he attached no blame either to the alien act, or to the minister who had exerted it against him; and a still greater, that he spoke of London with rapture, and of his favourite niece, who had married and settled in England, with all the fervour and all the pride of a fond parent. A man sent by force out of a country, obliged to sell out of the stocks at a great loss, and exiled from those plea-

asures and that style of society which habit had rendered essential to his happiness, whose predominant feelings were yet all of a private nature, resentment for friendship outraged, and anguish for domestic affections interrupted—such a man, I think, I could dare warrant guiltless of *espionage* in any service, most of all in that of the present French Directory. He spoke with ecstasy of Paris under the monarchy: and yet the particular facts, which made up his description, left as deep a conviction on my mind, of French worthlessness, as his own tale had done of emigrant ingratitude. Since my arrival in Germany I have not met a single person, even among those who abhor the Revolution, that spoke with favour, or even charity, of the French emigrants. Though the belief of their influence in the origination of this disastrous war (from the horrors of which North Germany deems itself only reprieved, not secured), may have some share in the general aversion with which they are regarded; yet I am deeply persuaded that the far greater part is owing to their own profligacy, to their treachery and hard-heartedness to each other, and the domestic misery or corrupt principles which so many of them have carried into the families of their protectors. My heart dilated with honest pride, as I recalled to mind the stern yet amiable characters of the English patriots, who sought refuge on the Continent at the Restoration! Oh let not our civil war under the first Charles be paralleled with the French revolution! In the former, the chalice overflowed from excess of principle; in the latter, from the fermentation of the dregs! The former was a civil war between the virtues and virtuous prejudices of the two parties; the latter between the vices. The Venetian glass of the French monarchy shivered and flew asunder with the working of a double poison.

Sept. 20th. I was introduced to Mr. Klopstock, the brother of the poet, who again introduced me to Professor Ebeling, an intelligent and lively man, though deaf: so deaf, indeed, that it was a painful effort to talk with him, as we were obliged to drop all our pearls into a huge ear-trumpet. From this courteous and kind-hearted man of letters (I hope the German literati in general may resemble this first specimen) I heard a tolerable Italian pun, and an interesting anecdote. When Buonaparte was in Italy, having been irritated by some instance of perfidy, he said in a loud and vehement tone, in a public company—"tis a true proverb, *gli Italiani tutti ladroni* (i.e. *the Italians all plunderers*). A lady had the courage to reply, "*Non tutti: ma buona parte*" (not all, but a good part, or Buonaparte). This, I confess, sounded to

my ears as one of the many good things that *might have been* said. The anecdote is more valuable; for it instances the ways and means of French insinuation. Hoche had received much information concerning the face of the country from a map of unusual fulness and accuracy, the maker of which, he heard, resided at Dusseldorf. At the storming of Dusseldorf by the French army, Hoche previously ordered that the house and property of this man should be preserved, and entrusted the performance of the order to an officer on whose troop he could rely. Finding afterwards that the man had escaped before the storming commenced, Hoche exclaimed, "He had no reason to flee! it is for such men, not *against* them, that the French nation makes war, and consents to shed the blood of its children." You remember Milton's sonnet:

"The great Emathian conqueror bid spare  
The house of Pindarus when temple and tower  
Went to the ground"

Now though the Dusseldorf map-maker may stand in the same relation to the Theban bard, as the snail that marks its path by lines of film on the wall it creeps over, to the eagle that soars sunward and beats the tempest with its wings; it does not therefore follow, that the Jacobin of France may not be as valiant a general and as good a politician as the madman of Macedon.

From Professor Ebeling's Mr. Klopstock accompanied my friend and me to his own house, where I saw a fine bust of his brother. There was a solemn and heavy greatness in his countenance which corresponded to my preconceptions of his style and genius. I saw there, likewise, a very fine portrait of Lessing, whose works are at present the chief object of my admiration. His eyes were uncommonly like mine, if anything, rather larger and more prominent. But the lower part of his face and his nose, O what an exquisite expression of elegance and sensibility! There appeared no depth, weight, or comprehensiveness, in the forehead. The whole face seemed to say that Lessing was a man of quick and voluptuous feelings; of an active but light fancy; acute; yet acute, not in the observation of actual life, but in the arrangements and managements of the ideal world, *i.e.*, in taste, and in metaphysics. I assure you that I wrote these very words in my memorandum book with the portrait before my eyes, and when I knew nothing of Lessing but his name, and that he was a German writer of eminence.

We consumed two hours and more over a bad dinner, at the *table d'hôte*. "*Patience at a German ordinary, smiling at time.*" The Germans are the worst cooks in Europe. There is placed for

every two persons a bottle of common wine—Rhenish and Claret alternately; but in the houses of the opulent, during the many and long intervals of the dinner, the servants hand round glasses of richer wines. At the Lord of Culpin's they came in this order: Burgundy—Madeira—Port—Frontignac—Pacchiaretti—Old Hock—Mountain—Champagne—Hock again—Bishop—and, lastly, Punch. A tolerable quantum, methinks! The last dish at the ordinary, viz. slices of roast pork (for all the larger dishes are brought in, cut up, and first handed round and then set on the table) with stewed prunes and other sweet fruits, and this followed by cheese and butter, with plates of apples, reminded me of Shakespeare,\* and Shakespeare put it in my head to go to the French comedy.

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Bless me! why it is worse than our modern English plays! The first act informed me, that a court martial is to be held on a Count Vatron, who had drawn his sword on the Colonel, his brother-in-law. The officers plead in his behalf—in vain! His wife, the Colonel's sister, pleads with most tempestuous agonies—in vain! She falls into hysterics and faints away, to the dropping of the inner curtain! In the second act sentence of death is passed on the Count—his wife as frantic and hysterical as before: more so (good industrious creature!) she could not be. The third and last act, the wife still frantic, very frantic indeed! the soldiers just about to fire, the handkerchief actually dropped, when reprieve! reprieve! is heard from behind the scenes: and in comes Prince Somebody, pardons the Count, and the wife is still frantic, only with joy; that was all!

O dear lady! this is one of the cases, in which laughter is followed by melancholy: for such is the *kind* of drama which is now substituted everywhere for Shakespeare and Racine. You well know, that I offer violence to my own feelings in joining these names. But however meanly I may think of the French serious drama, even in its most perfect specimens; and with whatever right I may complain of its perpetual falsification of the language, and of the connections and transitions of thought, which nature has appropriated to states of passion; still, however, the French tragedies are consistent works of art, and the offspring of great intellectual power. Preserving a fitness in the parts, and a harmony in the whole, they form a nature of their own,

\* "*Slender*.—I bruised my shin with playing with sword and dagger for a dish of stewed prunes, and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since." So again,

"*Foams*.—I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese yet to come."—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act 1.

though a false nature. Still they excite the minds of the spectators to active thought, to a striving after ideal excellence. The soul is not stupefied into mere sensations, by a worthless sympathy with our own ordinary sufferings, or an empty curiosity for the surprising, undignified by the language or the situations which awe and delight the imagination. What (I would ask of the crowd, that press forward to the pantomimic tragedies and weeping comedies of Kotzebue and his imitators)—what are you seeking? Is it comedy? But in the comedy of Shakespeare and Molière the more accurate my knowledge, and the more profoundly I think, the greater is the satisfaction that mingles with my laughter. For though the qualities which these writers portray are ludicrous indeed, either from the kind or the excess, and exquisitely ludicrous, yet are they the natural growth of the human mind, and such as, with more or less change in the drapery, I can apply to my own heart, or at least to whole classes of my fellow-creatures. How often are not the moralist and the metaphysician obliged for the happiest illustrations of general truths and the subordinate laws of human thought and action, to quotations not only from the tragic characters, but equally from the Jaques, Falstaff, and even from the fools and clowns of Shakespeare, or from the Miser, Hypochondriast, and Hypocrite of Molière! Say not that I am recommending abstractions: for these class-characteristics, which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shakespearian drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence, and (if I may mention his name without pedantry to a lady) Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth itself which is uppermost in the consciousness, in poetry the individual form in which the Truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of poetry. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely, much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, slang phrases for the day, or the clothing of commonplace morals in metaphors drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters; nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them fac-similes of their own mean selves in all

their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to affect us indeed, but within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are," and of the peculiar state in which each man happens to be; suspending our individual recollections and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

*Hold!* (Methinks I hear the spokesman of the crowd reply, and we will listen to him. I am the plaintiff, and be he the defendant.)

DEFENDANT. *Hold!* are not our modern sentimental plays filled with the best Christian morality?

PLAINTIFF. Yes! just as much of it, and just that part of it, which you can exercise without a single Christian virtue—without a single sacrifice that is really painful to you!—just as much as flatters you, sends you away pleased with your own hearts, and quite reconciled to your vices, which can never be thought very ill of, when they keep such good company, and walk hand in hand with so much compassion and generosity; adulation so loathsome, that you would spit in the man's face who dared offer it to you in a private company; unless you interpreted it as insulting irony, you appropriate with infinite satisfaction, when you share the garbage with the whole sty, and gobble it out of a common trough. No Cæsar must pace your boards—no Antony, no royal Dane, no Orestes, no Andromache!

D. No: or as few of them as possible. What has a plain citizen of London, or Hamburg, to do with your kings and queens, and your old school-boy Pagan heroes? Besides, everybody knows the *stories*: and what curiosity can we feel—

P. What, Sir, not for the *manner*? not for the delightful language of the poet? not for the situations, the action and reaction of the passions?

D. You are hasty, Sir: the only curiosity we feel is in the story: and how can we be anxious concerning the end of a play, or be surprised by it, when we know how it will turn out?

P. Your pardon for having interrupted you! we now understand each other. You seek, then, in a tragedy, which wise men of old held for the highest effort of human genius, the same gratification as that you receive from a new novel, the last German romance, and other dainties of the day, which *can* be enjoyed but

once. If you carry these feelings to the sister art of Painting, Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel, and the Scripture Gallery of Raphael, can expect no favour from you. *You know all about them beforehand*; and are, doubtless, more familiar with the subjects of those paintings than with the tragic tales of the historic or heroic ages. There is a consistency, therefore, in your preference of contemporary writers: for the great men of former times, those at least who were deemed great by our ancestors, sought so little to gratify *this* kind of curiosity, that they seemed to have regarded the *story* in a not much higher light than the painter regards his canvas: as that *on*, not *by*, which they were to display their appropriate excellence. No work, resembling a tale or romance, can well show less variety of invention in the incidents, or less anxiety in weaving them together, than the Don Quixote of Cervantes. Its admirers feel the disposition to go back and re-peruse some preceding chapter at least ten times for once that they find any eagerness to hurry forwards: or open the book on those parts which they best recollect, even as we visit those friends oftenest whom we love most, and with whose characters and actions we are the most intimately acquainted. In the divine Ariosto (as his countrymen call this, their darling poet) I question whether there be a single *tale* of his own invention, or the elements of which were not familiar to the readers of "old romance." I will pass by the ancient Greeks, who thought it even necessary to the fable of a tragedy that its substance should be previously known. That there had been at least fifty tragedies with the same title, would be one of the motives which determined Sophocles and Euripides in the choice of "Electra" as a subject. But Milton——

D. Aye, Milton, indeed! but do not Dr. Johnson, and other great men, tell us, that nobody now reads Milton but as a task?

P. So much the worse for them of whom this can be truly said! But why then do you pretend to admire Shakespeare? The greater part, if not all, of his dramas were, as far as the names and the main incidents are concerned, already stock plays. All the stories, at least, on which they are built, pre-existed in the chronicles, ballads, or translations of contemporary or preceding English writers. Why, I repeat, do you pretend to admire Shakespeare? Is it, perhaps, that you only *pretend* to admire him? However as, once for all, you have dismissed the well-known events and personages of history, or the epic muse, what have you taken in their stead? Whom has your tragic muse armed with her bowl and dagger? the sentimental muse I should



have said, whom you have seated *in* the throne of tragedy? What heroes has she reared on her buskins?

D. O! our good friends and next-door neighbours—honest tradesmen, valiant tars, high-spirited half-pay officers, philanthropic Jews, virtuous courtezans, tender-hearted braziers, and sentimental rat-catchers! (a little bluff or so, but all our very generous, tender-hearted characters are a little rude or misanthropic, and all our misanthropes very tender-hearted.)

P. But I pray you, friend, in what actions, great or interesting, can such men be engaged?

D. They give away a great deal of money: find rich dowries for young men and maidens who have all other good qualities: they brow-beat lords, baronets, and justices of the peace (for they are as bold as Hector!)—they rescue stage-coaches at the instant they are falling down precipices; carry away infants in the sight of opposing armies; and some of our performers act a muscular able-bodied man to such perfection, that our dramatic poets, who always have the actors in their eye, seldom fail to make their favourite male character as strong as Samson. And then they take such prodigious leaps!! And what is done on the stage is more striking even than what is acted. I once remember such a deafening explosion, that I could not hear a word of the play for half an act after it: and a little real gunpowder being set fire to at the same time, and smelt by all the spectators, the naturalness of the scene was quite astonishing!

P. But how can you connect with such men and such actions that dependence of thousands on the fate of one, which gives so lofty an interest to the personages of Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians? How can you connect with them that sublimest of all feelings, the power of destiny and the controlling might of heaven, which seems to elevate the characters which sink beneath its irresistible blow?

D. O mere fancies! We seek and find on the present stage our own wants and passions, our own vexations, losses, and embarrassments.

P. It is your own poor pettifogging nature, then, which you desire to have represented before you, not human nature in its height and vigour? But surely you might find the former, with all its joys and sorrows, more conveniently in your own houses and parishes?

D. True! but here comes a difference. Fortune is blind, but the poet has his eyes open, and is, besides, as complaisant as fortune is capricious. He makes everything turn out ex-

actly as we would wish it. He gratifies us by representing those as hateful or contemptible whom we hate and wish to despise.

P. (*Aside.*) That is, he gratifies your envy by libelling your superiors.

D. He makes all those precise moralists, who affect to be better than their neighbours, turn out at last abject hypocrites, traitors, and hard-hearted villains; and your men of spirit, who take their girl and their glass with equal freedom, prove the true men of honour, and (that no part of the audience may remain unsatisfied) reform in the last scene, and leave no doubt on the minds of the ladies that they will make most faithful and excellent husbands: though it does seem a pity, that they should be obliged to get rid of qualities which had made them so interesting! Besides, the poor become rich all at once; and in the final matrimonial choice the opulent and high-born themselves are made to confess, that VIRTUE IS THE ONLY TRUE NOBILITY, AND THAT A LOVELY WOMAN IS A DOWRY OF HERSELF!!

P. Excellent! But you have forgotten those brilliant flashes of loyalty, those patriotic praises of the King and Old England, which, especially if conveyed in a metaphor from the ship or the shop, so often solicit and so unfailingly receive the public plaudit! I give your prudence credit for the omission. For the whole system of your drama is a moral and intellectual *Jacobinism* of the most dangerous kind, and those common-place rants of loyalty are no better than hypocrisy in your playwrights, and your own sympathy with them a gross self-delusion. For the whole secret of dramatic popularity consists with you, in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things, their causes and their effects; in the excitement of surprise, by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour (those things rather, which pass among you for such) in persons and in classes of life where experience teaches us least to expect them; and in rewarding with the sympathies that are the dues of virtue those criminals whom law, reason, and religion, have excommunicated from our esteem!

And now, good-night! Truly I might have written this last sheet without having gone to Germany, but I fancied myself talking to you by your own fire-side: and can you think it a small pleasure to me to forget, now and then, that I am *not* there? Besides, you and my other good friends have made up your minds to me as I am, and from whatever place I write you will expect that part of my "Travels" will consist of the excursions in my own mind.

## LETTER III.

## RATZEBURG.

No little fish thrown back again into the water, no fly unimprisoned from a child's hand, could more buoyantly enjoy its element, than I this clean and peaceful house, with this lovely view of the town, groves, and lake of Ratzeburg, from the window at which I am writing. My spirits certainly, and my health, I fancied, were beginning to sink under the noise, dirt, and unwholesome air of our Hamburg hotel. I left it on Sunday, Sept. 23rd, with a letter of introduction from the poet Klopstock to the *Amtmann* of Ratzeburg. The *Amtmann* received me with kindness, and introduced me to the worthy pastor, who agreed to board and lodge me for any length of time not less than a month. The vehicle, in which I took my place, was considerably larger than an English stage-coach, to which it bore much the same proportion and rude resemblance that an elephant's ear does to the human. Its top was composed of naked boards of different colours, and seeming to have been parts of different wainscots. Instead of windows there were leathern curtains with a little eye of glass in each: they perfectly answered the purpose of keeping out the prospect and letting in the cold. I could observe little, therefore, but the inns and farm-houses at which we stopped. They were all alike, except in size: one great room, like a barn, with a hay-loft over it, the straw and hay dangling in tufts through the boards which formed the ceiling of the room, and the floor of the loft. From this room, which is paved like a street, sometimes one, sometimes two, smaller ones are enclosed at one end. These are commonly floored. In the large room the cattle, pigs, poultry, men, women, and children, live in amicable community: yet there was an appearance of cleanliness and rustic comfort. One of these houses I measured. It was a hundred feet in length. The apartments were taken off from one corner. Between these and the stalls there was a small interspace, and here the breadth was forty-eight feet, but thirty-two where the stalls were; of course, the stalls were on each side eight feet in depth. The faces of the cows, &c., were turned towards the room; indeed they were in it, so that they had at least the comfort of seeing each other's faces. Stall-feeding is universal in this part of Germany, a practice concerning which the agriculturist and the poet are likely to entertain opposite opinions—or at least, to have

very different feelings. The wood-work of these buildings on the outside is left unplastered, as in old houses among us, and being painted red and green, it cuts and tessellates the buildings very gaily. From within three miles of Hamburg almost to Molln, which is thirty miles from it, the country, as far as I could see it, was a dead flat, only varied by woods. At Molln it became more beautiful. I observed a small lake nearly surrounded with groves, and a palace in view belonging to the king of Great Britain, and inhabited by the inspector of the forests. We were nearly the same time in travelling the thirty-five miles from Hamburg to Ratzeburg as we had been in going from London to Yarmouth, one hundred and twenty-six miles.

The lake of Ratzeburg runs from south to north, about nine miles in length, and varying in breadth from three miles to half a mile. About a mile from the southernmost point it is divided into two, of course very unequal, parts by an island, which being connected by a bridge and a narrow slip of land with the one shore, and by another bridge of immense length with the other shore, forms a complete isthmus. On this island the town of Ratzeburg is built. The pastor's house or vicarage, together with the *Amtmann's*, *Amtsschreiber's*, and the church, stands near the summit of a hill, which slopes down to the slip of land and the little bridge, from which, through a superb military gate, you step into the island-town of Ratzeburg. This again is itself a little hill, by ascending and descending which you arrive at the long bridge, and so to the other shore. The water to the south of the town is called the Little Lake, which however almost engrosses the beauties of the whole: the shores being just often enough green and bare to give the proper effect to the magnificent groves which occupy the greater part of their circumference. From the turnings, windings, and indentations of the shore, the views vary almost every ten steps, and the whole has a sort of majestic beauty, a feminine grandeur. At the north of the Great Lake, and peeping over it, I see the seven church towers of Lubeck, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, yet as distinctly as if they were not three. The only defect in the view is, that Ratzeburg is built entirely of red bricks, and all the houses roofed with red tiles. To the eye, therefore, it presents a clump of brick-dust red. Yet this evening, Oct. 10th, twenty minutes past five, I saw the town perfectly beautiful, and the whole softened down into *complete keeping*, if I may borrow a term from the painters. The sky over Ratzeburg and all the east was a pure evening blue, while over the west it was covered with light sandy clouds.

Hence a deep red light spread over the whole prospect, in undisturbed harmony with the red town, the brown-red woods, and the yellow-red reeds on the skirts of the lake. Two or three boats, with single persons paddling them, floated up and down in the rich light, which not only was itself in harmony with all, but brought all into harmony.

I should have told you that I went back to Hamburg on Thursday (Sept. 27th) to take leave of my friend, who travels southward, and returned hither on the Monday following. From Empfelde, a village half-way from Ratzeburg, I walked to Hamburg through deep sandy roads and a dreary flat: the soil everywhere white, hungry, and excessively pulverized; but the approach to the city is pleasing. Light cool country-houses, which you can look through and see the gardens behind them, with arbours and trellis work, and thick vegetable walls, and trees in cloisters and piazzas, each house with neat rails before it, and green seats within the rails. Every object, whether the growth of nature or the work of man, was neat and artificial. It pleased me far better than if the houses and gardens and pleasure-fields had been in a nobler taste: for this nobler taste would have been mere apéry. The busy, anxious, money-loving merchant of Hamburg could only have adopted, he could not have enjoyed, the simplicity of nature. The mind begins to love nature by imitating human conveniences in nature; but this is a step in intellect, though a low one; and were it not so, yet all around me spoke of innocent enjoyment and sensitive comforts, and I entered with unscrupulous sympathy into the enjoyments and comforts even of the busy, anxious, money-loving merchants of Hamburg. In this charitable and catholic mood I reached the vast ramparts of the city. These are huge green cushions, one rising above the other, with trees growing in the interspaces, pledges, and symbols of a long peace. Of my return I have nothing worth communicating, except that I took extra post, which answers to posting in England. These north German post-chaises are uncovered wicker carts. An English dust-cart is a piece of finery, a *chef d'œuvre* of mechanism, compared with them: and the horses! a savage might use their ribs instead of his fingers for a numeration table. Wherever we stopped, the postilion fed his cattle with the brown rye bread of which he ate himself, all breakfasting together, only the horses had no gin to their water, and the postilion no water to his gin. Now and henceforward for subjects of more interest to you, and to the objects in search of which I left you; namely, the *litterati* and literature of Germany.

Believe me, I walked with an impression of awe on my spirits, as W—— and myself accompanied Mr. Klopstock to the house of his brother, the poet, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the city gate. It is one of a row of little common-place summer-houses (for so they looked), with four or five rows of young meagre elm-trees before the windows, beyond which is a green, and then a dead flat intersected with several roads. Whatever beauty (thought I) may be before the poet's eyes at present, it must certainly be purely of his own creation. We waited a few minutes in a neat little parlour, ornamented with the figures of two of the Muses and with prints, the subjects of which were from Klopstock's odes. The poet entered. I was much disappointed in his countenance, and recognized in it no likeness to the bust. There was no comprehension in the forehead, no weight over the eye-brows, no expression of peculiarity, moral or intellectual, on the eyes, no massiveness in the general countenance. He is, if anything, rather below the middle size. He wore very large half-boots which his legs filled, so fearfully were they swollen. However, though neither W—— nor myself could discover any indications of sublimity or enthusiasm in his physiognomy, we were both equally impressed with his liveliness, and his kind and ready courtesy. He talked in French with my friend, and with difficulty spoke a few sentences to me in English. His enunciation was not in the least affected by the entire want of his upper teeth. The conversation began on his part by the expression of his rapture at the surrender of the detachment of French troops under General Humbert. Their proceedings in Ireland with regard to the committee which they had appointed, with the rest of their organizing system, seemed to have given the poet great entertainment. He then declared his sanguine belief in Nelson's victory, and anticipated its confirmation with a keen and triumphant pleasure. His words, tones, looks, implied the most vehement Anti-Gallicanism. The subject changed to literature, and I inquired in Latin concerning the history of German poetry and the older German poets. To my great astonishment he confessed, that he knew very little on the subject. He had indeed occasionally read one or two of their elder writers, but not so as to enable him to speak of their merits. Professor Ebeling, he said, would probably give me every information of this kind: the subject had not particularly excited his curiosity. He then talked of Milton and Glover, and thought Glover's blank verse superior to Milton's. W—— and myself expressed our surprise: and my friend gave his definition and notion of harmonious verse, that it consisted (the English iambic

blank verse above all) in the apt arrangement of pauses and cadences, and the sweep of whole paragraphs,

—————" with many a winding bout  
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,"

and not in the even flow, much less in the prominence or antithetic vigour, of single lines, which were indeed injurious to the total effect, except where they were introduced for some specific purpose. Klopstock assented, and said that he meant to confine Glover's superiority to single lines. He told us that he had read Milton, in a prose translation, when he was fourteen.\* I understood him thus myself, and W—— interpreted Klopstock's French as I had already construed it. He appeared to know very little of Milton—or indeed of our poets in general. He spoke with great indignation of the English prose translation of his *Messiah*. All the translations had been bad, very bad—but the English was *no* translation—there were pages on pages not in the original:—and half the original was not to be found in the translation. W—— told him that I intended to translate a few of his odes as specimens of German lyrics; he then said to me in English, "I wish you would render into English some select passages of the *Messiah*, and *revenge* me of your countryman!" It was the liveliest thing which he produced in the whole conversation. He told us that his first ode was fifty years older than his last. I looked at him with much emotion—I considered him as the venerable father of German poetry; as a good man; as a Christian; seventy-four years old; with legs enormously swollen; yet active, lively, cheerful, and kind and communicative. My eyes felt as if a tear were swelling into them. In the portrait of Lessing there was a toupee periwig, which enormously injured the effect of his physiognomy; Klopstock wore the same, powdered and frizzled. By the by, old men ought never to wear powder: the contrast between a large snow-white wig and the colour of an old man's skin is disgusting, and wrinkles in such a neighbourhood appear only channels for dirt. It is an honour to poets and great men, that you think of them as parts of nature; and any thing of trick and fashion wounds you in them as much as when you see venerable yews clipped into miserable peacocks. The author of the *Messiah* should have worn his own grey hair. His powder and periwig were to the eye what *Mr. Virgil* would be to the ear.

\* This was accidentally confirmed to me by an old German gentleman at Helmstadt, who had been Klopstock's school and bed fellow. Among other boyish anecdotes, he related

that the young poet set a particular value on a translation of the *Paradise Lost*, and always slept with it under his pillow.

Klopstock dwelt much on the superior power which the German language possessed of concentrating meaning. He said he had often translated parts of Homer and Virgil, line by line, and a German line proved always sufficient for a Greek or Latin one. In English you cannot do this. I answered, that in English we could commonly render one Greek heroic line in a line and a half of our common heroic metre, and I conjectured that this line and a half would be found to contain no more syllables than one German or Greek hexameter. He did not understand me: \* and I who wished to hear his opinions, not to correct them, was glad that he did not.

We now took our leave. At the beginning of the French Revolution Klopstock wrote odes of congratulation. He received some honorary presents from the French Republic (a golden crown I believe), and, like our Priestley, was invited to a seat in the legislature, which he declined. But when French liberty metamorphosed herself into a fury, he sent back these presents with a palinodia, declaring his abhorrence of their proceedings: and since then he has been perhaps more than enough an Anti-Gallican. I mean, that in his just contempt and detestation of the crimes and follies of the Revolutionists, he suffers himself to forget that the revolution itself is a process of the Divine Providence;

\* Klopstock's observation was partly true and partly erroneous. In the literal sense of his words, and if we confine the comparison to the average of space required for the expression of the same thought in the two languages, it is erroneous. I have translated some German hexameters into English hexameters, and find, that on the average three lines English will express four lines German. The reason is evident: our language abounds in monosyllables and dissyllables. The German, not less than the Greek, is a polysyllable language. But in another point of view the remark was not without foundation. For the German possessing the same unlimited privilege of forming compounds, both with prepositions and with epithets, as the Greek, it can express the richest single Greek word in a single German one, and is thus freed from the necessity of weak or ungraceful paraphrases. I will content myself with one example at present, viz. the use of the prefixed particles *ver*, *zer*, *ent*, and *weg*: thus, *reißen* to rend, *verreißen* to rend away, *zerreißen* to rend to pieces, *entreißen* to rend off or out of a thing, in the active sense: or *schmelzen* to melt—*ver*, *zer*, *ent*, *schmelzen*—and in like manner through all the verbs, neuter and active. If you consider only how much we should feel the loss of the prefix *be*, as in *bedropt*, *besprinkle*, *besot*, especially in our poetical language, and then think that this same mode of composition is carried

through all their simple and compound prepositions, and many of their adverbs, and that with most of these the Germans have the same privilege as we have of dividing them from the verb and placing them at the end of the sentence, you will have no difficulty in comprehending the reality and the cause of this superior power in the German of condensing meaning, in which its great poet exulted. It is impossible to read half a dozen pages of Wieland without perceiving that in this respect the German has no rival but the Greek. And yet I seem to feel, that concentration or condensation is not the happiest mode of expressing this excellence, which seems to consist not so much in the less time required for conveying an impression, as in the unity and simultaneousness with which the impression is conveyed. It tends to make their language more picturesque: it depicts images better. We have obtained this power in part by our compound verbs derived from the Latin: and the sense of its great effect no doubt induced our Milton both to the use and the abuse of Latin derivatives. But still these prefixed particles, conveying no separate or separable meaning to the mere English reader, cannot possibly act on the mind with the force or liveliness of an original and homogeneous language such as the German is, and besides, are confined to certain words.



and that as the folly of men is the wisdom of God, so are their iniquities instruments of His goodness. From Klopstock's house we walked to the ramparts, discoursing together on the poet and his conversation, till our attention was diverted to the beauty and singularity of the sunset and its effects on the objects around us. There were woods in the distance. A rich sandy light (nay, of a much deeper colour than sandy) lay over these woods that blackened in the blaze. Over that part of the woods which lay immediately under the intenser light, a brassy mist floated. The trees on the ramparts, and the people moving to and fro between them, were cut or divided into equal segments of deep shade and brassy light. Had the trees, and the bodies of the men and women, been divided into equal segments by a rule or pair of compasses, the portions could not have been more regular. All else was obscure. It was a fairy scene! and to increase its romantic character, among the moving objects thus divided into alternate shade and brightness was a beautiful child, dressed with the elegant simplicity of an English child, riding on a stately goat, the saddle, bridle, and other accoutrements of which were in a high degree costly and splendid. Before I quit the subject of Hamburg let me say, that I remained a day or two longer than I otherwise should have done, in order to be present at the feast of St. Michael, the patron saint of Hamburg, expecting to see the civic pomp of this commercial Republic. I was, however, disappointed. There were no processions; two or three sermons were preached to two or three old women in two or three churches, and St. Michael and his patronage wished elsewhere by the higher classes, all places of entertainment, theatre, &c., being shut up on this day. In Hamburg there seems to be no religion at all: in Lubeck it is confined to the women. The men seem determined to be divorced from their wives in the other world, if they cannot in this. You will not easily conceive a more singular sight than is presented by the vast aisle of the principal church at Lubeck seen from the organ-loft: for being filled with female servants and persons in the same class of life, and all their caps having gold and silver cauls, it appears like a rich pavement of gold and silver.

I will conclude this letter with the mere transcription of notes, which my friend W—— made of his conversations with Klopstock during the interviews that took place after my departure. On these I shall make but one remark at present, and that will appear a presumptuous one, namely, that Klopstock's remarks on the venerable sage of Königsberg are to my own knowledge injurious and mistaken; and so far is it from being true that his system is

now given up, that throughout the Universities of Germany there is not a single professor who is not either a Kantian or a disciple of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantian, and presupposes its truth; or lastly, who, though an antagonist of Kant as to his theoretical work, has not embraced wholly or in part his moral system, and adopted part of his nomenclature. "Klopstock having wished to see the Calvary of Cumberland, and asked what was thought of it in England, I went to Remnant's (the English bookseller), where I procured the *Analytical Review*, in which is contained the review of Cumberland's Calvary. I remembered to have read there some specimens of a blank verse translation of the Messiah. I had mentioned this to Klopstock, and he had a great desire to see them. I walked over to his house and put the book into his hands. On adverting to his own poem, he told me he began the Messiah when he was seventeen: he devoted three entire years to the plan without composing a single line. He was greatly at a loss in what manner to execute his work. There were no successful specimens of versification in the German language before this time. The first three cantos he wrote in a species of measured or numerous prose. This, though done with much labour and some success, was far from satisfying him. He had composed hexameters both Latin and Greek as a school exercise, and there had been also in the German language attempts in that style of versification. These were only of very moderate merit. One day he was struck with the idea of what could be done in this way—he kept his room a whole day, even went without his dinner, and found that in the evening he had written twenty-three hexameters, versifying a part of what he had before written in prose. From that time, pleased with his efforts, he composed no more in prose. To-day he informed me that he had finished his plan before he read Milton. He was enchanted to see an author who before him had trod the same path. This is a contradiction of what he said before. He did not wish to speak of his poem to any one till it was finished: but some of his friends who had seen what he had finished, tormented him till he had consented to publish a few books in a journal. He was then, I believe, very young, about twenty-five. The rest was printed at different periods, four books at a time. The reception given to the first specimens was highly flattering. He was nearly thirty years in finishing the whole poem, but of these thirty years not more than two were employed in the composition. He only composed in favourable moments; besides, he had other occupations. He values himself upon the plan of his odes, and accuses the modern lyrical writers of gross

deficiency in this respect. I laid the same accusation against Horace: he would not hear of it, but waived the discussion. He called Rousseau's Ode to Fortune a moral dissertation in stanzas. I spoke of Dryden's St. Cecilia; but he did not seem familiar with our writers. He wished to know the distinctions between our dramatic and epic blank verse. He recommended me to read his Hermann before I read either the Messiah or the odes. He flattered himself that some time or other his dramatic poems would be known in England. He had not heard of Cowper. He thought that Voss in his translation of the Iliad had done violence to the idiom of the German, and had sacrificed it to the Greek, not remembering sufficiently that each language has its particular spirit and genius. He said Lessing was the first of their dramatic writers. I complained of Nathan as tedious. He said there was not enough of action in it; but that Lessing was the most chaste of their writers. He spoke favourably of Goethe; but said that his Sorrows of Werter was his best work, better than any of his dramas: he preferred the first written to the rest of Goethe's dramas. Schiller's Robbers he found so extravagant, that he could not read it. I spoke of the scene of the setting sun. He did not know it. He said Schiller could not live. He thought Don Carlos the best of his dramas; but said that the plot was inextricable. It was evident he knew little of Schiller's works: indeed, he said he could not read them. Burger, he said, was a true poet, and would live; that Schiller, on the contrary, must soon be forgotten; that he gave himself up to the imitation of Shakespeare, who often was extravagant, but that Schiller was ten thousand times more so. He spoke very slightly of Kotzebue, as an immoral author in the first place, and next as deficient in power. At Vienna, said he, they are transported with him; but we do not reckon the people of Vienna either the wisest or the wittiest people of Germany. He said Wieland was a charming author, and a sovereign master of his own language: that in this respect Goethe could not be compared to him, nor indeed could anybody else. He said that his fault was to be fertile to exuberance. I told him the Oberon had just been translated into English. He asked me if I was not delighted with the poem. I answered that I thought the story began to flag about the seventh or eighth book, and observed that it was unworthy of a man of genius to make the interest of a long poem turn entirely upon animal gratification. He seemed at first disposed to excuse this by saying, that there are different subjects for poetry, and that poets are not willing to be restricted in their choice. I answered, that I thought the pas-

sion of love as well suited to the purposes of poetry as any other passion; but that it was a cheap way of pleasing to fix the attention of the reader through a long poem on the mere *appetite*. Well! but, said he, you see that such poems please everybody. I answered, that it was the province of a great poet to raise people up to his own level, not to descend to theirs. He agreed, and confessed that on no account whatsoever would he have written a work like the *Oberon*. He spoke in raptures of Wieland's style, and pointed out the passage where Retzia is delivered of her child as exquisitely beautiful. I said that I did not perceive any very striking passages; but that I made allowance for the imperfections of a translation. Of the thefts of Wieland, he said, they were so exquisitely managed, that the greatest writers might be proud to steal as he did. He considered the books and fables of old romance writers in the light of the ancient mythology, as a sort of common property, from which a man was free to take whatever he could make a good use of. An Englishman had presented him with the odes of Collins, which he had read with pleasure. He knew little or nothing of Gray, except his *Elegy* in a Churchyard. He complained of the fool in *Lear*. I observed that he seemed to give a terrible wildness to the distress, but still he complained. He asked whether it was not allowed, that Pope had written rhymed poetry with more skill than any of our writers—I said I preferred Dryden, because his couplets had greater variety in their movement. He thought my reason a good one; but asked whether the rhyme of Pope were not more exact. This question I understood as applying to the final terminations, and observed to him that I believed it was the case; but that I thought it was easy to excuse some inaccuracy in the final sounds if the general sweep of the verse was superior. I told him that we were not so exact with regard to the final endings of lines as the French. He did not seem to know that we made no distinction between masculine and feminine (*i.e.* single or double) rhymes: at least he put inquiries to me on this subject. He seemed to think that no language could ever be so far formed as that it might not be enriched by idioms borrowed from another tongue. I said this was a very dangerous practice, and added that I thought Milton had often injured both his prose and verse by taking this liberty too frequently. I recommended to him the prose works of Dryden as models of pure and native English. I was treading upon tender ground, as I have reason to suppose that he has himself liberally indulged in the practice.

The same day I dined at Mr. Klopstock's, where I had the plea-

sure of a third interview with the poet. We talked principally about indifferent things. I asked him what he thought of Kant: He said that his reputation was much on the decline in Germany. That for his own part he was not surprised to find it so, as the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible—that he had often been pestered by the Kantians; but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it, and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion. He spoke of Wolfe as the first metaphysician they had in Germany. Wolfe had followers, but they could hardly be called a sect; and luckily till the appearance of Kant, about fifteen years ago, Germany had not been pestered by any sect of philosophers whatsoever, but that each man had separately pursued his inquiries uncontrolled by the dogmas of a master. Kant had appeared ambitious to be the founder of a sect; that he had succeeded; but that the Germans were now coming to their senses again. That Nicolai and Engel had in different ways contributed to disenchant the nation, but above all the incomprehensibility of the philosopher and his philosophy. He seemed pleased to hear that as yet Kant's doctrines had not met with many admirers in England—did not doubt but that we had too much wisdom to be duped by a writer who set at defiance the common sense and common understandings of men. We talked of tragedy. He seemed to rate highly the power of exciting tears; I said that nothing was more easy than to deluge an audience—that it was done every day by the meanest writers.

I must remind you, my friend, first, that these notes, &c., are not intended as specimens of Klopstock's intellectual power, or even "*colloquial prowess*," to judge of which by an accidental conversation, and this with strangers, and those, too, foreigners, would be not only unreasonable, but calumnious. Secondly, I attribute little other interest to the remarks than what is derived from the celebrity of the person who made them. Lastly, if you ask me whether I have read the *Messiah*, and what I think of it, I answer—as yet the first four books only: and as to my opinion (the reasons of which hereafter) you may guess it from what I could not help muttering to myself, when the good pastor this morning told me that Klopstock was the German Milton—"a very German Milton indeed!!!—Heaven preserve you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE

T

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Quid quod profectione præmunierim libellum, quæ conor omnem offendiculi ansam prævidere? Neque quicquam addubito, quin ea candidis omnibus faciat satis. Quid autem facias istis, qui vel ob ingentis pertinaciam sibi satisfieri nolint, vel stupidiore sint, quam ut satisfactionem intelligant? Nam quemadmodum Simonides dixit, Thessalos hebetiores esse quam ut possint a se decipi, ita quosdam videas stupidiore quam ut placari queant. Adhæc, non mirum est, invenire quod calumniatur qui nihil aliud querit nisi quod calumniatur.*

ERASMUS ad Dorpium, Theologum.

IN the rifacimento of *The Friend*, I have inserted extracts from the *Conciones ad Populum*, printed, though scarcely published, in the year 1795, in the very heat and height of my anti-ministerial enthusiasm: these in proof that my principles of *politics* have sustained no change. In the present chapter I have annexed to my Letters from Germany, with particular reference to that, which contains a disquisition on the modern drama, a critique on the tragedy of *Bertram*, written within the last twelve months: in proof that I have been as falsely charged with any fickleness in my principles of *taste*. The letter was written to a friend, and the apparent abruptness with which it begins is owing to the omission of the introductory sentences.

You remember, my dear Sir, that Mr. Whitbread, shortly before his death, proposed to the assembled subscribers of Drury Lane Theatre, that the concern should be farmed to some responsible individual under certain conditions and limitations: and that his proposal was rejected, not without indignation, as subversive of the main object, for the attainment of which the enlightened and patriotic assemblage of philodramatists had been induced to risk their subscriptions. Now this object was avowed to be no less than the redemption of the British stage not only from horses, dogs, elephants, and the like zoological rarities, but also from the more pernicious barbarisms and Kotzebuisms in morals and taste. Drury Lane was to be restored to its former classic renown; Shakespeare, Jonson, and Otway, with the expurgated muses of Vanburgh, Congreve, and Wycherley, were to be re-inaugurated in their rightful dominion over British audiences; and the Herculean process was to commence, by exterminating the speaking monsters imported from the banks of the Danube, compared with which their mute relations, the emigrants from Exeter 'Change, and Polito (late Pidcock's) show-carts, were tame and inoffensive.

Could an heroic project, at once so refined and so arduous, be consistently entrusted to, could its success be rationally expected from, a mercenary manager, at whose critical quarantine the *lucri bonus odor* would conciliate a bill of health to the plague in person? No! As the work proposed, such must be the work-masters. Rank, fortune, liberal education, and (their natural accompaniments or consequences) critical discernment, delicate tact, disinterestedness, unsuspected morals, notorious patriotism, and tried Mæcenasship—these were the recommendations that influenced the votes of the proprietary subscribers of Drury Lane Theatre, these the motives that occasioned the election of its Supreme Committee of Management. This circumstance alone would have excited a strong interest in the public mind respecting the first production of the Tragic Muse, which had been announced under such auspices, and had passed the ordeal of such judgments: and the tragedy, on which you have requested my judgment, was the work on which the great expectations, justified by so many causes, were doomed at length to settle.

But before I enter on the examination of Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand, I shall interpose a few words on the phrase *German Drama*, which I hold to be altogether a misnomer. At the time of Lessing, the German stage, such as it was, appears to have been a flat and servile copy of the French. It was Lessing who first introduced the name and the works of Shakespeare to the admiration of the Germans; and I should not, perhaps, go too far, if I add that it was Lessing who first proved to all thinking men, even to Shakespeare's own countrymen, the true nature of his apparent irregularities. These, he demonstrated, were deviations only from the *accidents* of the Greek Tragedy; and from such accidents as hung a heavy weight on the wings of the Greek poets, and narrowed their flight within the limits of what we may call the *heroic opera*. He proved that in all the essentials of art, no less than in the truth of nature, the plays of Shakespeare were incomparably more coincident with the principles of Aristotle than the productions of Corneille and Racine, notwithstanding the boasted regularity of the latter. Under these convictions were Lessing's own dramatic works composed. Their deficiency is in depth and in imagination: their excellence is in the construction of the plot; the good sense of the sentiments; the sobriety of the morals, and the high polish of the diction and dialogue. In short, his dramas are the very antipodes of all those which it has been the fashion of late years at once to abuse and to enjoy under the name of the German drama. Of this latter Schiller's Robbers

was the earliest specimen; the first fruits of his youth (I had almost said of his boyhood), and as such, the pledge and promise of no ordinary genius. Only as such did the maturer judgment of the author tolerate the play. During his whole life he expressed himself concerning this production with more than needful asperity, as a monster not less offensive to good taste than to sound morals; and in his latter years his indignation at the unwonted popularity of the Robbers seduced him into the contrary extremes, viz. a studied feebleness of interest (as far as the interest was to be derived from incidents and the excitement of curiosity); a diction elaborately metrical, the affectation of rhymes, and the pedantry of the chorus.

But to understand the true character of the Robbers, and of the countless imitations which were its spawn, I must inform you, or at least call to your recollection, that about that time, and for some years before it, three of the most popular books in the German language were the translations of Young's Night Thoughts, Hervey's Meditations, and Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*. Now we have only to combine the bloated style and peculiar rhythm of Hervey, which is poetic only on account of its utter unfitness for prose, and might as appropriately be called prosaic from its utter unfitness for poetry; we have only, I repeat, to combine these Herveyisms with the strained thoughts, the figurative metaphysics, and solemn epigrams of Young on the one hand, and with the loaded sensibility, the minute detail, the morbid consciousness of every thought and feeling in the whole flux and reflux of the mind; in short, the self-involution and dreamlike continuity of Richardson on the other hand; and then to add the horrific incidents and mysterious villains (geniuses of supernatural intellect, if you will take the author's words for it, but on a level with the meanest ruffians of the condemned cells, if we are to judge by their actions and contrivances)—to add the ruined castles, the dungeons, the trap-doors, the skeletons, the flesh-and-blood ghosts, and the perpetual moonshine of a modern author (themselves the literary brood of the Castle of Otranto, the translations of which, with the imitations and improvements aforesaid, were about that time beginning to make as much noise in Germany as their originals were making in England)—and as the compound of these ingredients duly mixed, you will recognise the so-called *German drama*. The *olla podrida* thus cooked up was denounced, by the best critics in Germany, as the mere cramps of weakness, and orgasms of a sickly imagination on the part of the author, and the lowest provocation of torpid feeling on that of the readers. The old



blunder, however, concerning the irregularity and wildness of Shakespeare, in which the German did but echo the French, who again were but the echoes of our own critics, was still in vogue, and Shakespeare was quoted as authority for the most anti-Shakespearian drama. We have indeed two poets who wrote as one, near the age of Shakespeare, to whom (as the worst characteristic of their writings) the Coryphæus of the present drama may challenge the honour of being a poor relation, or impoverished descendant. For if we would charitably consent to forget the comic humour, the wit, the felicities of style, in other words, *all* the poetry, and nine-tenths of all the genius of Beaumont and Fletcher, that which would remain becomes a Kotzebue.

The so-called *German* drama, therefore, is *English* in its origin, *English* in its materials, and *English* by re-adoption; and till we can prove that Kotzebue, or any of the whole breed of Kotzebues, whether dramatists or romantic writers, or writers of romantic dramas, were ever admitted to any other shelf in the libraries of well-educated Germans than were occupied by their originals, and apes' apes in their mother country, we should submit to carry our own brat on our own shoulders; or rather consider it as a lack-grace returned from transportation, with such improvements only in growth and manners as young transported convicts usually come home with.

I know nothing that contributes more to a clear insight into the true nature of any literary phenomenon than the comparison of it with some elder production, the *likeness* of which is *striking*, yet only *apparent*: while the *difference* is *real*. In the present case this opportunity is furnished us by the old Spanish play entitled *Atheista Fulminato*, formerly, and perhaps still, acted in the churches and monasteries of Spain, and which, under various names (Don Juan, The Libertine, &c.) has had its day of favour in every country throughout Europe. A popularity so extensive, and of a work so grotesque and extravagant, claims and merits philosophical attention and investigation. The first point to be noticed is, that the play is throughout imaginative. Nothing of it belongs to the real world but the names of the places and persons. The comic parts equally with the tragic, the living equally with the defunct characters, are creatures of the brain; as little amenable to the rules of ordinary probability, as the Satan of *Paradise Lost*, or the Caliban of the *Tempest*, and therefore to be understood and judged of as impersonated abstractions. Rank, fortune, wit, talent, acquired knowledge, and liberal accomplishments, with beauty of person, vigorous health, and constitutional

hardihood—all these advantages, elevated by the habits and sympathies of noble birth and national character, are supposed to have combined in Don Juan, so as to give him the means of carrying into all its practical consequences the doctrine of a godless nature, as the sole ground and efficient cause not only of all things, events, and appearances, but likewise of all our thoughts, sensations, impulses, and actions. Obedience to nature is the only virtue: the gratification of the passions and appetites her only dictate: each individual's self-will the sole organ through which nature utters her commands, and

"Self-contradiction is the only wrong!  
For by the laws of spirit, in the right  
Is every individual character  
That acts in strict consistence with itself."

That speculative opinions, however impious and daring they may be, are not always followed by correspondent conduct, is most true, as well as that they can scarcely in any instance be systematically realized on account of their unsuitableness to human nature and to the institutions of society. It can be hell only where it is all hell: and a separate world of devils is necessary for the existence of any one complete devil. But on the other hand it is no less clear, nor, with the biography of Carrier and his fellow-atheists before us, can it be denied without wilful blindness, that the (so called) system of nature (*i.e.*, materialism, with the utter rejection of moral responsibility, of a present Providence, and of both present and future retribution) may influence the characters and actions of individuals, and even of communities, to a degree that almost does away the distinction between men and devils, and will make the page of the future historian resemble the narration of a madman's dreams. It is not the wickedness of Don Juan, therefore, which constitutes the character an abstraction, and removes it from the rules of probability; but the rapid succession of the correspondent acts and incidents, his intellectual superiority, and the splendid accumulation of his gifts and desirable qualities, as co-existent with *entire* wickedness in one and the same person. But this likewise is the very circumstance which gives to this strange play its charm and universal interest. Don Juan is, from beginning to end, an intelligible character: as much so as the Satan of Milton. The poet asks only of the reader what as a poet he is privileged to ask, *viz.*, that sort of negative faith in the existence of such a being, which we willingly give to productions professedly ideal, and a disposition to the same state of feeling as that with which we contemplate the idealized figures of

the Apollo Belvidere, and the Farnese Hercules. What the Hercules is to the eye in corporeal strength, Don Juan is to the mind in strength of character. The ideal consists in the happy balance of the generic with the individual. The former makes the character representative and symbolical, therefore instructive; because, *mutatis mutandis*, it is applicable to whole classes of men. The latter gives its living interest; for nothing lives or is real but as definite and individual. To understand this completely the reader need only recollect the specific state of his feelings when, in looking at a picture of the historic (more properly of the poetic or heroic) class, he objects to a particular figure as being too much of a portrait; and this interruption of his complacency he feels without the least reference to, or the least acquaintance with, any person in real life whom he might recognise in this figure. It is enough that such a figure is not ideal; and therefore not ideal, because one of the two factors or elements of the ideal is in excess. A similar and more powerful objection he would feel towards a set of figures which were *mere* abstractions, like those of Cipriani, and what have been called Greek forms and faces, *i.e.*, outlines drawn according to a recipe. These again are not ideal; because in these the *other* element is in excess. *Forma formans per formam formatam translucens*, is the definition and perfection of ideal art.

This excellence is so happily achieved in the Don Juan, that it is capable of interesting without poetry, nay, even without words, as in our pantomime of that name. We see clearly how the character is formed; and the very extravagance of the incidents, and the superhuman entireness of Don Juan's agency, prevents the wickedness from shocking our minds to any painful degree. (We do not believe it enough for this effect; no, not even with that kind of temporary and negative belief or acquiescence which I have described above.) Meantime the qualities of his character are too desirable, too flattering to our pride and our wishes, not to make up on this side as much additional faith as was lost on the other. There is no danger (thinks the spectator or reader) of my becoming such a monster of iniquity as Don Juan! I never shall be an atheist! I shall never disallow all distinction between right and wrong! I have not the least inclination to be so outrageous a drawcansir in my love affairs! But to possess such a power of captivating and enchanting the affections of the other sex! to be capable of inspiring in a charming and even a virtuous woman a love so deep, and so entirely personal to me, that even my worst vices (if I were vicious), even my cruelty and perfidy

(if I were cruel and perfidious), could not eradicate the passion! To be so loved for my own self, that even with a distinct knowledge of my character she yet died to save me! This, sir, takes hold of two sides of our nature, the better and the worse. For the heroic disinterestedness, to which love can transport a woman, cannot be contemplated without an honourable emotion of reverence towards womanhood: and on the other hand, it is among the miseries, and abides in the dark ground-work of our nature, to crave an outward confirmation of that something within us, which is our very self, that something, not made up of our qualities and relations, but itself the supporter and substantial basis of all these. Love me, and not my qualities, may be a vicious and an insane wish, but it is not a wish wholly without a meaning.

Without power, virtue would be insufficient and incapable of revealing its being. It would resemble the magic transformation of Tasso's heroine into a tree, in which she could only groan and bleed. (Hence power is necessarily an object of our desire and of our admiration.) But of all power, that of the mind is, on every account, the grand desideratum of human ambition. We shall be as gods in knowledge, was and must have been the first temptation: and the co-existence of great intellectual lordship with guilt has never been adequately represented without exciting the strongest interest, and for this reason, that in this bad and heterogeneous co-ordination we can contemplate the intellect of man more exclusively as a separate self-subsistence, than in its proper state of subordination to his own conscience, or to the will of an infinitely superior being.

This is the sacred charm of Shakespeare's male characters in general. They are all cast in the mould of Shakespeare's own gigantic intellect; and this is the open attraction of his Richard, Iago, Edmund, &c. in particular. But, again, of all intellectual power, that of superiority to the fear of the invisible world is the most dazzling. Its influence is abundantly proved by the one circumstance, that it can bribe us into a voluntary submission of our better knowledge, into suspension of all our judgment derived from constant experience, and enable us to peruse with the liveliest interest the wildest tales of ghosts, wizards, genii, and secret talismans. On this propensity, so deeply rooted in our nature, a specific dramatic probability may be raised by a true poet, if the whole of his work be in harmony: a dramatic probability, sufficient for dramatic pleasure, even when the component characters and incidents border on impossibility. The poet does not require

us to be awake and believe; he solicits us only to yield ourselves to a dream; and this too with our eyes open, and with our judgment *perdue* behind the curtain, ready to awaken us at the first motion of our will: and meantime, only, not to *disbelieve*. And in such a state of mind, who but must be impressed with the cool intrepidity of Don John on the appearance of his father's ghost?

"GHOST.—Monster! behold these wounds!

D. JOHN.—I do! They were well meant and well performed, I see.

GHOST. Repent, repent of all thy villainies;  
My clamorous blood to heaven for vengeance cries,  
Heaven will pour out his judgments on you all.  
Hell gapes for you, for you each fiend doth call,  
And hourly waits your unrepenting fall.  
You with eternal horrors they'll torment,  
Except of all your crimes you suddenly repent.

(*Ghost sinks.*)

D. JOHN.—Farewell, thou art a foolish ghost. Repent, quoth he! what could this mean? Our senses are all in a mist sure.

D. ANTONIO (*one of D. Juan's reprobate companions*).—They are not! 'Twas a ghost.

D. LOPEZ (*another reprobate*).—I ne'er believed those foolish tales before.

D. JOHN.—Come! 'Tis no matter. Let it be what it will, it must be natural.

D. ANTONIO.—And nature is unalterable in us too.

D. JOHN.—'Tis true! The nature of a ghost can not change ours.

Who also can deny a portion of sublimity to the tremendous consistency with which he stands out the last fearful trial, like a second Prometheus?

"(*Chorus of devils.*)

"STATUE-GHOST.—Will you not relent and feel remorse?

D. JOHN.—Could'st thou bestow another heart on me, I might. But with this heart I have, I can not.

D. LOPEZ.—These things are prodigious.

D. ANTONIO.—I have a sort of grudging to relent, but something holds me back.

D. LOPEZ.—If we could, 'tis now too late. I will not.

D. ANTONIO.—We defy thee!

GHOST.—Perish, ye impious wretches! go and find the punishments laid up in store for you!

(*Thunder and lightning. D. Lopez and D. Antonio are swallowed up.*)

GHOST (*to D. John*).—Behold their dreadful fates, and know that thy last moment's come

D. JOHN.—Think not to fright me, foolish ghost; I'll break your marble body in pieces and pull down your horse.

(*Thunder and lightning—Chorus of devils, &c.*)

D. JOHN. These things I see with wonder, but no fear.

Were all the elements to be confounded,  
And shuffled all into their former chaos;  
Were seas of sulphur flaming round about me,  
And all mankind roaring within those fires,  
I could not fear, or feel the least remorse.  
To the last instant I would dare thy power.  
Here I stand firm, and all thy threats contemn.  
Thy murderer (*to the ghost of one whom he had murdered*)  
Stands here! Now do thy worst!

(*He is swallowed up in a cloud of fire.*)"

In fine, the character of Don John consists in the union of everything desirable to human nature, as means, and which therefore by the well-known law of association become at length desirable on their own account. On their own account, and in their own dignity, they are here displayed, as being employed to ends so *unhuman*, that in the effect, they appear almost as means without an end. The ingredients too are mixed in the happiest proportion, so as to uphold and relieve each other—more especially in that constant interpoise of wit, gaiety, and social generosity, which prevents the criminal, even in his most atrocious moments, from sinking into the mere ruffian, as far at least as our imagination sits in judgment. Above all, the fine suffusion through the whole, with the characteristic manners and feelings of a highly bred gentleman, gives life to the drama. Thus, having invited the statue-ghost of the governor, whom he had murdered, to supper, which invitation the marble ghost accepted by a nod of the head, Don John has prepared a banquet :

"D. JOHN.—Some wine, sirrah ! Here's to Don Pedro's ghost—he should have been welcome.

D. LOPEZ.—The rascal is afraid of you after death.

(One knocks hard at the door.)

D. JOHN (*to the servant*).—Rise and do your duty.

SERVANT.—Oh the devil, the devil !

(*Marble ghost enters.*)

D. JOHN.—Ha ! 'tis the ghost ! Let's rise and receive him ! Come Governor, you are welcome—sit there ; if we had thought you would have come, we would have staid for you.

Here, Governor, your health ! Friends, put it about ! Here's excellent meat, taste of this ragout. Come, I'll help you ; come, eat, and let old quarrels be forgotten.

(*The ghost threatens him with vengeance.*)

D. JOHN.—We are too much confirmed—curse on this dry discourse. Come, here's to your mistress—you had one when you were living : not forgetting your sweet sister. (*Devils enter.*)

D. JOHN.—Are these some of your retinue ? Devils say you ? I'm sorry I have no burnt brandy to treat 'em with—that's drink fit for devils," &c.

Nor is the scene from which we quote interesting in dramatic probability alone ; it is susceptible likewise of a sound moral ; of a moral that has more than common claims on the notice of a too numerous class, who are ready to receive the qualities of gentlemanly courage and scrupulous honour (in all the recognised laws of honour) as the *substitutes* of virtues, instead of its *ornaments*. This, indeed, is the moral value of the play at large, and that which places it at a world's distance from the spirit of modern Jacobinism. The latter introduces to us clumsy copies of these showy instrumental qualities, in order to reconcile us to vice and want of principle ; while the *Atheista Fulminato* presents an exquisite portraiture of the same qualities, in all their gloss and glow, but presents them for the sole purpose of displaying their

hollowness, and in order to put us on our guard by demonstrating their utter indifference to vice and virtue, whenever these and the like accomplishments are contemplated for themselves alone.

Eighteen years ago I observed, that the whole secret of the modern Jacobinical drama (which, and not the German, is its appropriate designation), and of all its popularity, consists in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things in their causes and effects: namely, in the excitement of surprise by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour (those things rather which pass amongst us for such) in persons and in classes where experience teaches us least to expect them; and by rewarding with all the sympathies which are the due of virtue those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem.

This of itself would lead me back to Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand; but, in my own mind, this tragedy was brought into connection with *The Libertine* (Shadwell's adaptation of the *Atheista Fulminato* to the English stage in the reign of Charles the Second) by the fact, that our modern drama is taken, in the substance of it, from the first scene of the third act of *The Libertine*. But with what palpable superiority of judgment in the original! Earth and hell, men and spirits, are up in arms against Don John; the two former acts of the play have not only prepared us for the supernatural, but accustomed us to the prodigious. It is, therefore, neither more nor less than we anticipate when the Captain exclaims: "In all the dangers I have been, such horrors I never knew. I am quite unmanned." And when the Hermit says, "that he had beheld the ocean in wildest rage, yet ne'er before saw a storm so dreadful; such horrid flashes of lightning, and such claps of thunder, were never in my remembrance." And Don John's burst of startling impiety is equally intelligible in its motive as dramatic in its effect.

But what is there to account for the prodigy of the tempest at Bertram's shipwreck? It is a mere supernatural effect without even a hint of any supernatural agency; a prodigy without any circumstance mentioned that is prodigious; and a miracle introduced without a ground, and ending without a result. Every event and every scene of the play might have taken place as well if Bertram and his vessel had been driven in by a common hard gale, or from want of provisions. The first act would have indeed lost its greatest and most sonorous picture; a scene for the sake of a scene, without a word spoken; as such, therefore (a rarity without a precedent), we must take it, and be thankful! In the

opinion of not a few, it was, in every sense of the word, the best scene in the play. I am quite certain it was the most innocent: and the steady, quiet uprightness of the flame of the wax candles which the monks held over the roaring billows amid the storm of wind and rain, was really miraculous.

The Sicilian sea coast: a convent of monks: night: a most portentous, unearthly storm: a vessel is wrecked: contrary to all human expectation, one man saves himself by his prodigious powers as a swimmer, aided by the peculiarity of his destination:

"PRIOR. All, all did perish—  
1st MONK.—Change, change those drenched weeds—  
PRIOR.—I wist not of them—every soul did perish—

*Enter 3d Monk hastily.*

3d MONK.—No, there was one did battle with the storm  
With careless desperate force; full many times  
His life was won and lost, as though he recked not—  
No hand did aid him, and he aided none—  
Alone he breasted the broad wave; alone  
That man was saved."

Well! This man is led in by the monks, supposed dripping wet, and to very natural inquiries he either remains silent, or gives most brief and surly answers, and after three or four of these half-line courtesies, "dashing off the monks" who had saved him, he exclaims in the true sublimity of our modern misanthropic heroism:

"Off! ye are men—there's poison in your touch.  
But I must yield, for this (*what?*) hath left me strengthless."

So end the three first scenes. In the next (the Castle of St. Aldobrand) we find the servants there equally frightened with this unearthly storm, though wherein it differed from other violent storms we are not told, except that Hugo informs us, page 9:

"PRIET.—Hugo, well met. Does e'en thy age bear  
Memory of so terrible a storm?  
HUGO.—They have been frequent lately.  
PRIET.—They are ever so in Sicily.  
HUGO.—So it is said. But storms when I was young  
Would still pass o'er like Nature's fitful fevers,  
And rendered all more wholesome. Now their rage,  
Sent thus unseasonable and profitless,  
Speaks like the threats of Heaven."

A most perplexing theory of Sicilian storms is this of old Hugo! and what is very remarkable, not apparently founded on any great familiarity of his own with this troublesome article. For when Pietro asserts the "ever more frequency" of tempests in Sicily, the old man professes to know nothing more of the fact,



but by hearsay. "So it is said." But why he assumed this storm to be unseasonable, and on what he grounded his prophecy (for the storm is still in full fury) that it would be profitless, and without the physical powers common to all other violent sea-winds in purifying the atmosphere, we are left in the dark; as well concerning the particular points in which he knew it (during its continuance) to differ from those that he had been acquainted with in his youth. We are at length introduced to the Lady Imogene, who, we learn, had not rested "*through*" the night, not on account of the tempest, for

"Long ere the storm arose, her restless gestures  
Forbade all hope to see her blest with sleep."

Sitting at a table, and looking at a portrait, she informs us—First, that portrait-painters may make a portrait from memory:

"The limner's art may trace the absent feature."

For surely these words could never mean, that a painter may have a person sit to him who afterwards may leave the room or perhaps the country? Second, that a portrait-painter can enable a mourning lady to possess a good likeness of her absent lover, but that the portrait-painter cannot, and who shall

"Restore the scenes in which they met and parted?"

The natural answer would have been—Why the scene-painter, to be sure! But this unreasonable lady requires in addition sundry things to be painted that have neither lines nor colours:

"The thoughts, the recollections sweet and bitter,  
Or the Elysian dreams of lovers when they loved."

Which last sentence must be supposed to mean, *when they were present, and making love to each other*. Then, if this portrait could speak, it would "acquit the faith of womankind." How? Had she remained constant? No, she has been married to another man, whose wife she now is. How then? Why, that, in spite of her marriage vow, she had continued to yearn and crave for her former lover:

"This has her body, that her mind:  
Which has the better bargain?"

The lover, however, was not contented with this precious arrangement, as we shall soon find. The lady proceeds to inform us, that during the many years of their separation, there have happened in the different parts of the world a number of "such things;" even such as in a course of years always have, and till

the Millennium doubtless always will happen somewhere or other. Yet this passage, both in language and in metre, is perhaps among the best parts of the play. The lady's loved companion and most esteemed attendant, Clotilda, now enters and explains this love and esteem by proving herself a most passive and dispassionate listener, as well as a brief and lucky querist, who asks by chance questions that we should have thought made for the very sake of answers. In short, she very much reminds us of those puppet-heroines, for whom the showman contrives to dialogue without any skill in ventriloquism. This, notwithstanding, is the best scene in the play, and though crowded with solecisms, corrupt diction, and offences against metre, would possess merits sufficient to outweigh them, if we could suspend the moral sense during the perusal. It tells well and passionately the preliminary circumstances, and thus overcomes the main difficulty of most first acts, viz. that of retrospective narration. It tells us of her having been honourably addressed by a noble youth, of rank and fortune vastly superior to her own: of their mutual love, heightened on her part by gratitude; of his loss of his sovereign's favour; his disgrace; his attainder and flight; that he (thus degraded) sank into a vile ruffian, the chieftain of a murderous banditti; and that from the habitual indulgence of the most reprobate habits and ferocious passions, he had become so changed, even in his appearance and features,

"That she who bore him had recoiled from him,  
Nor known the alien visage of her child,  
Yet still *she* (Imogene) lov'd him."

She is compelled by the silent entreaties of a father, perishing with "bitter shameful want on the cold earth," to give her hand, with a heart thus irrecoverably pre-engaged, to Lord Aldobrand, the enemy of her lover, even to the very man who had baffled his ambitious schemes, and was, at the present time, entrusted with the execution of the sentence of death which had been passed on Bertram. Now, the proof of "woman's love," so industriously held forth for the sympathy, if not the esteem, of the audience, consists in this: that though Bertram had become a robber and a murderer by trade, a ruffian in manners, yea, with form and features at which his *own mother* could not but "recoil," yet she (Lady Imogene), "the wife of a most noble, honoured lord," estimable as a man, exemplary and affectionate as a husband, and the fond father of her only child—that she, notwithstanding all this, striking her heart, dares to say to it:

"But thou art Bertram's still, and Bertram's ever."

A monk now enters, and entreats in his prior's name for the wonted hospitality, and "free noble usage" of the Castle of St. Aldobrand for some wretched shipwrecked souls, and from this learn, for the first time, to our infinite surprise, that notwithstanding the supernaturalness of the storm aforesaid, not only Bertram, but the whole of his gang, had been saved, by what means we are left to conjecture, and can only conclude that they had all the same desperate swimming powers, and the same saving destiny as the hero, Bertram himself. So ends the first act, and with it the tale of the events, both those with which the tragedy begins, and those which had occurred previous to the date of its commencement. The second displays Bertram in disturbed sleep, which the Prior who hangs over him prefers calling a "starting trance," and with a strained voice, that would have awakened one of the seven sleepers, observes to the audience :

"How the lip works! How the bare teeth do grind  
And beaded drops course \* down his writhen brow?"

The dramatic effect of which passage we not only concede to the admirers of this tragedy, but acknowledge the further advantage of preparing the audience for the most surprising series of wry faces, proflated mouths, and lunatic gestures, that were ever "launched" on an audience to "sear † the sense."

"PRIOR.—I will awake him from this horrid trance.  
This is no natural sleep! Ho, wake thee, stranger!"

This is rather a whimsical application of the verb reflex, we must confess, though we remember a similar transfer of the agent to the patient in a manuscript tragedy, in which the Bertram of the piece, prostrating a man with a single blow of his fist, exclaims—"Knock me thee down, then ask thee if thou liv'st."—Well, the stranger obeys, and whatever his sleep might have been, his waking was perfectly natural, for lethargy itself could not withstand the scolding stentorship of Mr. Holland, the Prior.

\* "The big round tears  
Coursed one another down his innocent  
nose  
In piteous chase,"

says Shakespeare of a wounded stag hanging its head over a stream; naturally from the position of the head, and most beautifully from the association of the preceding image, of the chase, in which, "the poor sequester'd stag from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt." In the supposed position of Bertram, the metaphor, if not false, loses all the propriety of the original.

† Among a number of other instances of words chosen without reason, I imagine in the

first act declares, that thunder-storms were not able to intercept her prayers for "the desperate man, in desperate ways who dealt"——

"Yea, when the launched bolt did sear her sense,

Her soul's deep orisons were breathed for him;

i. e., when a red-hot bolt launched at her from a thunder-cloud had cauterized her sense, in plain English, burnt her eyes out of her head, she kept still praying on.

"Was not this love? Yea, thus doth women love!"

We next learn from the best authority—his own confession—that the misanthropic hero, whose destiny was incompatible with drowning, is Count Bertram, who not only reveals his past fortunes, but avows, with open atrocity, his satanic hatred of Imogine's lord, and his frantic thirst of revenge; and so the raving character raves, and the scolding character scolds—and what else? Does not the Prior *act*? Does he not send for a posse of constables or thief-takers to handcuff the villain, and take him either to Bedlam or Newgate? Nothing of the kind; the author preserves the unity of character, and the scolding Prior from first to last does nothing but scold, with the exception indeed of the last scene of the last act, in which with a most surprising revolution he whines, weeps, and kneels to the condemned blaspheming assassin out of pure affection to the high-hearted man, the sublimity of whose angel-sin rivals the star-bright apostate (*i.e.*, who was as proud as Lucifer, and as wicked as the Devil), and “had thrilled him” (Prior Holland aforesaid) with wild admiration.

Accordingly, in the very next scene we have this tragic Macheath, with his whole gang, in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, without any attempt on the Prior's part either to prevent him, or to put the mistress and servants of the castle on their guard against their new inmates, though he (the Prior) *knew*, and confessed that he knew, that Bertram's “fearful mates” were assassins so habituated and naturalized to guilt, that

“When their *drenched hold* forsook both gold and gear,  
They griped their daggers with a murderer's instinct;”

and though he also knew that Bertram was the leader of a band whose trade was blood. To the castle however he goes, thus with the holy Prior's consent, if not with his assistance; and thither let us follow him.

No sooner is our hero safely housed in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, than he attracts the notice of the lady and her confidante, by his “wild and terrible dark eyes,” “muffled form,” “fearful form,”\* “darkly wild,” “proudly stern,” and the like common-

\* This sort of repetition is one of this writer's peculiarities, and there is scarce a page which does not furnish one or more instances—Ex. gr. in the first page or two. Act 1, line 7th, “and *deemed* that I might sleep.”—Line 10, “Did rock and *quiver* in the bickering *glare*.”—Lines 14, 15, 16, “But by the momentarily *gleams* of sheeted blue, Did the pale marbles *glare* so *sternly* on me, I almost *deemed* they lived.”—Line 37, “The

*glare* of Hell.—Line 35, “O holy Prior, this is no *earthly storm*.”—Line 38, “This is no *earthly storm*.”—Line 42, “*Dealing* with us.”—Line 43, “*Deal* thus sternly.”—Line 44, “Speak! thou hast *something seen*!”—“A *fearful sight*!”—Line 45, “What hast thou seen? A piteous, *fearful sight*.”—Line 48, “*quivering gleams*.”—Line 50, “In the hollow *pauses of the storm*.”—Line 61 “The *pauses of the storm*,” &c.

place indefinites, seasoned by merely verbal antitheses, and at best copied with very slight change from the Conrade of Southey's Joan of Arc. The Lady Imogene, who has been (as is the case, she tells us, with all soft and solemn spirits) *worshipping* the moon on a terrace or rampart within view of the castle, insists on having an interview with our hero, and this too *tête-à-tête*. Would the reader learn why and wherefore the confidante is excluded, who very properly remonstrates against such "conference, alone, at night, with one who bears such fearful form," the reason follows—"why, *therefore*, send him!" I say *follows*, because the next line, "all things of fear have lost their power over me," is separated from the former by a break or pause, and besides, that it is a very poor answer to the danger, is no answer at all to the gross indelicacy of this wilful exposure. We must therefore regard it as a mere after-thought, that a little softens the rudeness, but adds nothing to the weight, of that exquisite woman's reason aforesaid. And so exit Clotilda and enter Bertram, who "stands without looking at her," that is, with his lower limbs forked, his arms akimbo, his side to the lady's front, the whole figure resembling an inverted Y. He is soon however roused from the state surly to the state frantic, and then follow raving, yelling, cursing, she fainting, he relenting, in runs Imogene's child, squeaks "mother!" He snatches it up, and with a "God bless thee, child! Bertram has kissed thy child,"—the curtain drops. The third act is short, and short be our account of it. It introduces Lord St. Aldobrand on his road homeward, and next Imogene in the convent, confessing the foulness of her heart to the prior, who first indulges his old humour with a fit of senseless scolding, then leaves her alone with her ruffian paramour, with whom she makes at once an infamous appointment, and the curtain drops, that it may be carried into act and consummation.

I want words to describe the mingled horror and disgust, with which I witnessed the opening of the fourth act, considering it as a melancholy proof of the depravation of the public mind. The shocking spirit of Jacobinism seemed no longer confined to politics. The familiarity with atrocious events and characters appeared to have poisoned the taste, even where it had not directly disorganized the moral principles, and left the feelings callous to all the mild appeals, and craving alone for the grossest and most outrageous stimulants. The very fact then present to our senses, that a British audience could remain passive under such an insult to common decency, nay, receive with a thunder of

applause a human being supposed to have come reeking from the consummation of this complex foulness and baseness, these and the like reflections so pressed as with the weight of lead upon my heart, that actor, author, and tragedy would have been forgotten, had it not been for a plain elderly man sitting beside me, who with a very serious face, that at once expressed surprise and aversion, touched my elbow, and pointing to the actor, said to me in a half whisper—"Do you see that little fellow there? he has just been committing adultery!" Somewhat relieved by the laugh which this droll address occasioned, I forced back my attention to the stage sufficiently to learn, that Bertram is recovered from a transient fit of remorse, by the information that St. Aldobrand was commissioned (to do what every honest man must have done without commission, if he did his duty) to seize him and deliver him to the just vengeance of the law; an information which (as he had long known himself to be an attained traitor and proclaimed outlaw, and not only a trader in blood himself, but notoriously the Captain of a gang of thieves, pirates, and assassins) assuredly could not have been new to him. It is this, however, which alone and instantly restores him to his accustomed state of raving, blasphemy, and nonsense. Next follows Imogene's constrained interview with her injured husband, and his sudden departure again, all in love and kindness, in order to attend the feast of St. Anselm at the convent. This was, it must be owned, a very strange engagement for so tender a husband to make within a few minutes after so long an absence. But first his lady has told him that she has "a vow on her," and wishes "that black perdition may gulf her perjured soul" (Note: she is lying at the very time) if she ascends his bed till her penance is accomplished. How, therefore, is the poor husband to amuse himself in this interval of her penance? But do not be distressed, reader, on account of the St. Aldobrand's absence! As the author has contrived to send him out of the house, when a husband would be in his and the lover's way, so he will doubtless not be at a loss to bring him back again as soon as he is wanted. Well! the husband gone in on the one side, out pops the lover from the other, and for the fiendish purpose of harrowing up the soul of his wretched accomplice in guilt, by announcing to her with most brutal and blasphemous execrations his fixed and deliberate resolve to assassinate her husband; all this too is for no discoverable purpose on the part of the author, but that of introducing a series of super-tragic starts, pauses, screams, struggling, dagger-throwing, falling on the ground, starting up again wildly, swearing, outcries for help.

falling again on the ground, rising again, faintly tottering towards the door, and, to end the scene, a most convenient fainting fit of our lady's, just in time to give Bertram an opportunity of seeking the object of his hatred, before she alarms the house, which indeed she has had full time to have done before, but that the author rather chose she should amuse herself and the audience by the above-described ravings and startings. She recovers slowly, and to her enter Clotilda, the confidante and mother confessor; then commences, what in theatrical language is called the madness, but which the author more accurately entitles delirium, it appearing indeed a sort of intermittent fever with fits of light-headedness off and on, whenever occasion and stage effect happen to call for it. A convenient return of the storm (we told the reader beforehand how it would be) had changed

"The rivulet, that bathed the Convent walls,  
Into a foaming flood : upon its brink  
The Lord and his small train *do* stand appalled.  
With torch and bell from their high battlements  
The monks *do* summon to the pass in vain;  
He must return to-night."

Talk of the devil, and his horns appear, says the proverb: and sure enough, within ten lines of the exit of the messenger sent to stop him, the arrival of Lord St. Aldobrand is announced. Bertram's ruffian band now enter, and range themselves across the stage, giving fresh cause for Imogene's screams and madness. St. Aldobrand having received his mortal wound behind the scenes, totters in to welter in his blood, and to die at the feet of this double-damned adulteress.

Of her, as far as she is concerned in this fourth act, we have two additional points to notice: first, the low cunning and jesuitical trick with which she deludes her husband into *words* of forgiveness, which he himself does not understand; and secondly, that everywhere she is made the object of interest and sympathy, and it is not the author's fault if at any moment she excites feelings less gentle than those we are accustomed to associate with the self-accusations of a sincere, religious penitent. And did a British audience endure all this?—They received it with plaudits, which, but for the rivalry of the carts and hackney coaches, might have disturbed the evening prayers of the scanty week-day congregation at St. Paul's Cathedral:

"*Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.*"

Of the fifth act, the only thing noticeable (for rant and nonsense, though abundant as ever, have long before the last act become

things of course) is the profane representation of the high altar in a chapel, with all the vessels and other preparations for the holy sacrament. A hymn is actually sung on the stage by the chorister boys! For the rest, Imogine, who now and then talks deliriously, but who is always light-headed as far as her gown and hair can make her so, wanders about in dark woods with cavern-rocks and precipices in the back scene; and a number of mute *dramatis personæ* move in and out continually, for whose presence there is always at least this reason, that they afford something to be seen by that very large part of a Drury Lane audience who have small chance of hearing a word. She had, it appears, taken her child with her, but what becomes of the child, whether she murdered it or not, nobody can tell, nobody can learn; it was a riddle at the representation, and after a most attentive perusal of the play, a riddle it remains:

"No more I know, I wish I did,  
And I would tell it all to you;  
For what became of this poor child  
There's none that ever knew."

WORDSWORTH'S *Thorn*.

Our whole information\* is derived from the following words:

"Where is thy child?

CLOTIL. (*pointing to the cavern into which she has looked*):

Oh, he lies cold within his cavern tomb!

Why dost thou urge her with the horrid theme?

PRIOR (*who will not, the reader may observe, be disappointed of his dose of scolding*):

It was to make (*query* wake) one living chord o' th' heart,

And I will try, tho' my own breaks at it.

Where is thy child?

IMOG. (*with a frantic laugh*):

The forest-fiend hath snatched him—

He (*who? the fiend or the child?*) rides the night-mare thro' the wizard woods."

Now these two lines consist in a senseless plagiarism from the counterfeited madness of Edgar in *Lear*, who, in imitation of the gipsy incantations, puns on the old word *mair*, a hag; and the no less senseless adoption of Dryden's forest-fiend, and the wizard-stream by which Milton, in his *Lycidas*, so finely characterises the spreading Deva, *fabulosus amnis*. Observe, too, these images stand unique in the speeches of Imogine, without the slightest resemblance to any thing she says before or after. But we are weary. The characters in this act frisk about, here, there, and everywhere, as teasingly as the Jack o'Lantern lights which mischievous boys,

\* This child is an important personage, for I see not by what possible means the author could have ended the second and third acts

but for its timely appearance. How ungrateful then act further to notice its fate?



from across a narrow street, throw with a looking-glass on the faces of their opposite neighbours. Bertram disarmed, out-heroding Charles de Moor in the Robbers, befaces the collected knights of St. Anselm (all in complete armour), and so, by pure dint of black looks, he outdares them into passive poltroons. The sudden revolution in the Prior's manners we have before noticed, and it is indeed so *outré*, that a number of the audience imagined a great secret was to come out, viz. that the Prior was one of the many instances of a youthful sinner metamorphosed into an old scold, and that this Bertram would appear at last to be his son. Imogine reappears at the convent, and dies of her own accord. Bertram stabs himself, and dies by her side, and that the play may conclude as it began, viz. in a superfetation of blasphemy upon nonsense, because he had snatched a sword from a despicable coward, who retreats in terror when it is pointed towards him in sport; this *felo de se*, and thief-captain, this loathsome and leprous confluence of robbery, adultery, murder, and cowardly assassination, this monster whose best deed is, the having saved his betters from the degradation of hanging him, by turning Jack Ketch to himself, first recommends the charitable Monks and holy Prior to pray for his soul, and then has the folly and impudence to exclaim :

" I died no felon's death ;  
A warrior's weapon freed a warrior's soul !"

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### CONCLUSION.

**I**T sometimes happens that we are punished for our faults by incidents, in the causation of which these faults had no share : and this I have always felt the severest punishment. The wound indeed is of the same dimensions ; but the edges are jagged, and there is a dull under-pain that survives the smart which it had aggravated. For there is always a consolatory feeling that accompanies the sense of a proportion between antecedents and consequents. The sense of Before and After becomes both intelligible and intellectual when, and *only* when, we contemplate the succession in the relations of Cause and Effect, which like the two poles of the magnet manifest the being and unity of the one power by relative opposites, and give, as it were, a substratum of permanence, of identity and therefore of reality, to the shadowy

flux of Time. It is Eternity revealing itself in the phenomena of Time: and the perception and acknowledgment of the proportionality and appropriateness of the Present to the Past, prove to the afflicted Soul, that it has not yet been deprived of the sight of God, that it can still recognise the effective presence of a Father, though through a darkened glass and a turbid atmosphere, though of a Father that is chastising it. And for this cause, doubtless, are we so framed in mind, and even so organized in brain and nerve, that all confusion is painful. It is within the experience of many medical practitioners, that a patient, with strange and unusual symptoms of disease, has been more distressed in mind, more wretched, from the fact of being unintelligible to himself and others, than from the pain or danger of the disease: nay, that the patient has received the most solid comfort, and resumed a genial and enduring cheerfulness, from some new symptom or product, that had at once determined the name and nature of his complaint, and rendered it an intelligible effect of an intelligible cause: even though the discovery did at the same moment preclude all hope of restoration. Hence the mystic theologians, whose delusions we may more confidently hope to separate from their actual intuitions, when we condescend to read their works without the presumption that whatever our fancy (always the ape, and too often the adulterator and counterfeit of our memory) has not made or cannot make a picture of, must be nonsense,—hence, I say, the Mystics have joined in representing the state of the reprobate spirits as a dreadful dream in which there is no sense of reality, not even of the pangs they are enduring—an eternity without time, and as it were below it—God present without manifestation of His presence. But these are depths, which we dare not linger over. Let us turn to an instance more on a level with the ordinary sympathies of mankind. Here, then, and in this same healing influence of *Light* and distinct Beholding, we may detect the final cause of that instinct which in the great majority of instances leads and almost compels the Afflicted to communicate their sorrows. Hence too flows the alleviation that results from “*opening out* our griefs:” which are thus presented in distinguishable forms instead of the mist, through which whatever is shapeless becomes magnified and (literally) *enormous*. Casimir, in the Fifth Ode of his Third Book, has happily \* expressed this thought.

\* *Classically* too, as far as consists with the allegorizing fancy of the *modern*, that still *striving to project* the inward, contradistinguishes itself from the seeming ease

with which the poetry of the ancients *reflects* the world without. Casimir affords, perhaps, the most striking instance of this characteristic difference.—For his *style* and *diction*

" *Me longus silendi*

*Edidit amor facilesque luctus*

" *Hausit medullas. Fugerit ocyus,*

*Stimul negantem visere jussuris*

*Aures amicorum, et loquacem*

*Questibus evacuaris iram.*

" *Olim querendo desinimus queri,*

*Ipsaque fletu lacryma perditur,*

*Nec fortis æquæ, si per omnes*

*Cura volat residetque ramos.*

" *Vires amicis perdit in auribus*

*Minorque semper dividitur dolor,*

*Per multa permissus vagari*

*Pectora."*

*Id. Lib. iii. Od. 5.*

I shall not make this an excuse, however, for troubling my readers with any complaints or explanations, with which, as readers, they have little or no concern. It may suffice (for the present at least) to declare that the causes that have delayed the publication of these volumes for so long a period after they had been printed off, were not connected with any neglect of my own; and that they would form an instructive comment on the chapter concerning authorship as a trade, addressed to young men of genius in the first volume of this work. I remember the ludicrous effect produced on my mind by the first sentence of an autobiography, which happily for the writer was as meagre in incidents as it is well possible for the life of an individual to be—"The *eventful* life which I am about to record, from the hour in which I rose into existence on this planet, &c." Yet when, notwithstanding this warning example of self-importance before me, I review my own life, I cannot refrain from applying the same epithet to it, and with more than ordinary emphasis—and no private feeling, that affected myself only, should prevent me from *publishing* the same (for *write* it I assuredly shall, should life and leisure be granted me) if continued reflection should strengthen my present belief, that my history would add its contingent to the enforcement of one important truth, viz. that we must not only love our neighbours as ourselves, but ourselves likewise as our neighbours; and that we can do neither unless we love God above both.

are really classical: while Cowley, who resembles Casimir in many respects, completely barbarizes his Latinity, and even his metre, by the heterogeneous nature of his thoughts. That Dr. Johnson should have passed a contrary judgment, and have even preferred Cowley's Latin Poems to Milton's, is a caprice that has, if I mistake not, ex-

cited the surprise of all scholars. I was much amused last summer with the laughable *affright*, with which an Italian poet perused a page of Cowley's *Davidels*, contrasted with the enthusiasm with which he first ran through, and then read aloud, Milton's *Mansus* and *Ad Patrem*.

" Who lives, that's not  
Depraved or depraves? Who dies, that bears  
*Not one spurn to the grave—of their friends' gift?"*

Strange as the delusion may appear, yet it is most true that three years ago I did not know or believe that I had an enemy in the world: and now even my strongest sensations of gratitude are mingled with fear, and I reproach myself for being too often disposed to ask,—Have I one friend?—During the many years which intervened between the composition and the publication of the *Christabel*, it became almost as well known among literary men as if it had been on common sale; the same references were made to it, and the same liberties taken with it, even to the very names of the imaginary persons in the poem. From almost all of our most celebrated poets, and from some with whom I had no personal acquaintance, I either received or heard of expressions of admiration that (I can truly say) appeared to myself utterly disproportionate to a work, that pretended to be nothing more than a common Faëry Tale. Many, who had allowed no merit to my other poems, whether printed or manuscript, and who have frankly told me as much, uniformly made an exception in favour of the *Christabel* and the poem entitled *Love*. Year after year, and in societies of the most different kinds, I had been entreated to recite it: and the result was still the same in all, and altogether different in this respect from the effect produced by the occasional recitation of any other poems I had composed. This before the publication. And since then, with very few exceptions, I have heard nothing but abuse, and this too in a spirit of bitterness at least as disproportionate to the pretensions of the poem, had it been the most pitiable below mediocrity, as the previous eulogies, and far more inexplicable. In the "*Edinburgh Review*," it was assailed with a malignity and a spirit of personal hatred that ought to have injured only the work in which such a tirade was suffered to appear: and this review was generally attributed (whether rightly or no I know not) to a man, who both in my presence and in my absence has repeatedly pronounced it the finest poem of its kind in the language. This may serve as a warning to authors, that in their calculations on the probable reception of a poem they must subtract to a large amount from the panegyric, which may have encouraged them to publish it, however unsuspecting, and however various the sources of this panegyric may have been. And, first, allowances must be made for private enmity, of the very existence of which they had perhaps entertained no suspicion—for personal enmity behind the

mask of anonymous criticism: secondly, for the necessity of a certain proportion of abuse and ridicule in a Review, in order to make it saleable, in consequence of which, if they have no friends behind the scenes, the chance must needs be against them; but lastly and chiefly, for the excitement and temporary sympathy of feeling, which the recitation of the poem by an admirer, especially if he be at once a warm admirer and a man of acknowledged celebrity, calls forth in the audience. For this is really a species of animal magnetism, in which the enkindling reciter, by perpetual comment of looks and tones, lends his own will and apprehensive faculty to his auditors. They *live* for the time within the dilated sphere of his intellectual being. It is equally possible, though not equally common, that a reader left to himself should sink below the poem, as that the poem left to itself should flag beneath the feelings of the reader. But in my own instance, I had the additional misfortune of having been gossiped about, as devoted to metaphysics, and worse than all to a system incomparably nearer to the visionary flights of Plato, and even to the jargon of the Mystics, than to the established tenets of Locke. Whatever therefore appeared with my name, was condemned beforehand as predestined metaphysics. In a dramatic poem, which had been submitted by me to a gentleman of great influence in the theatrical world, occurred the following passage:—

“O we are querulous creatures! Little less  
Than all things can suffice to make us happy:  
And little more than nothing is enough  
To make us wretched.”

Aye, here now (exclaimed the critic)—here comes Coleridge’s *metaphysics*! And the very same motive (that is, not that the lines were unfit for the present state of our immense theatres, but that they were *metaphysics* \*) was assigned elsewhere for the rejection of the two following passages. The first is spoken in answer to a usurper, who had rested his plea on the circumstance, that he had been chosen by the acclamations of the people:—

“What people? How convened? Or if convened,  
Must not that magic power that charms together  
Millions of men in council, needs have power  
To win or wield them? Rather, O far rather,  
Shout forth thy titles to yon circling mountains,

\* Poor unlucky metaphysics! and what are they? A single sentence expresses the object and thereby the contents of this science. Γνωθὶ σεαυτὸν: *et Deum quantum* *sciet et in Deo omnia scibis.* Know thyself:

and so shalt thou know God, as far as is permitted to a creature, and in God all things. Surely, there is a strange—nay, rather a too natural—aversion in many to know them selves.

And with a thousandfold reverberation  
 Make the rocks flatter thee, and the volleying air,  
 Unbribed, shout back to thee, King Emerich !  
 By wholesome laws to embank the Sovereign Power ;  
 To deepen by restraint ; and by prevention  
 Of lawless will to amass and guide the flood  
 In its majestic channel, is man's task  
 And the true patriot's glory ! In all else,  
 Men safer trust to heaven than to themselves  
 When least themselves ; even in those whirling crowds  
 When folly is contagious, and too oft  
 Even wise men leave their better sense at home  
 To chide and wonder at them, when return'd."

The second passage is in the mouth of an old and experienced courtier, betrayed by the man in whom he had most trusted :

" And yet Barolta, simple, inexperienced,  
 Could see him as he was and oft has warn'd me.  
 Whence learnt she this ? O she was innocent !  
 And to be innocent is Nature's wisdom.  
 The fledge-dove knows the prowlers of the air,  
 Fear'd soon as seen, and flutters back to shelter !  
 And the young steed recoils upon his haunches,  
 The never-yet-seen adder's hiss first heard :  
 Ah ! surer than suspicion's hundred eyes  
 Is that fine sense, which to the pure in heart  
 By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness  
 Reveals the approach of evil !"

As therefore my character as a writer could not easily be more injured by an overt act than it was already in consequence of the report, I published a work, a large portion of which was professedly metaphysical. A long delay occurred between its first annunciation and its appearance ; it was reviewed therefore by anticipation with a malignity so avowedly and exclusively personal as is, I believe, unprecedented even in the present contempt of all common humanity that disgraces and endangers the liberty of the press. After its appearance, the author of this lampoon was chosen to review it in the "Edinburgh Review:" and under the single condition, that he should have written what he himself really thought, and have criticized the work as he would have done had its author been indifferent to him, I should have chosen that man myself, both from the vigour and the originality of his mind, and from his particular acuteness in speculative reasoning, before all others. I remembered Catullus's lines :

" *Desine de quoquam quicquam bene velle mereri,  
 Aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium.  
 Omnia sunt ingrata : nihil fecisse benigna est.  
 Immo, etiam tadet, tadet obestque magis.  
 Ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbius urget  
 Quem modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit.*"

But I can truly say, that the grief with which I read this rhapsody of predetermined insult had the rhapsodist himself for its whole and sole object: and that the indignant contempt which it excited in me, was as exclusively confined to his employer and suborner. I refer to this review at present, in consequence of information having been given me that the innuendo of my "potential infidelity," grounded on one passage of my first Lay Sermon, has been received and propagated with a degree of credence, of which I can safely acquit the originator of the calumny. I give the sentences as they stand in the sermon, premising only that I was speaking exclusively of miracles worked for the outward senses of men. "It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. REASON AND RELIGION ARE THEIR OWN EVIDENCE. The natural sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night-season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception.

"Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances co-exist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings render miracles superfluous: and if we neglect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God, and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion."

In the sermon and the notes both the historical truth and the necessity of the miracles are strongly and frequently asserted. "The testimony of books of history (i.e., relatively to the signs and wonders, with which Christ came) is one of the strong and stately *pillars* of the church; but it is not the *foundation*!" Instead, therefore, of defending myself, which I could easily effect by a series of passages, expressing the same opinion, from the Fathers and the most eminent Protestant divines, from the Reformation to the Revolution, I shall merely state what my belief is concerning the true evidences of Christianity. 1. Its consistency with right reason, I consider as the outer court of the temple—the common area within which it stands. 2. The miracles, with and through which the religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling, in the soul of each believer of its exceeding *desirableness*—the experience, that

he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretoking that the redemption and the graces propounded to us in Christ are *what* he needs—this I hold to be the true foundation of the spiritual edifice. With the strong *à priori* probability that flows in from 1 and 3 on the correspondent historical evidence of 2, no man can refuse or neglect to make the experiment without guilt. But, 4, it is the experience derived from a practical conformity to the conditions of the Gospel—it is the opening eye; the dawning light; the terrors and the promises of spiritual growth; the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of sin hated as sin, and of the incapability of attaining to either without Christ; it is the sorrow that still rises up from beneath and the consolation that meets it from above; the bosom treacheries of the principal in the warfare and the exceeding faithfulness and long-suffering of the uninterested ally;—in a word, it is the actual *trial* of the faith in Christ, with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched roof, and the faith itself is the completing keystone. In order to an efficient belief in Christianity, a man must have been a Christian, and this is the seeming *argumentum in circulo* incident to all spiritual truths, to every subject not presentable under the forms of time and space, as long as we attempt to master by the reflex acts of the understanding what we can only know by the act of becoming. “Do the will of My Father, and ye shall know whether I am of God.”\* These four evidences I believe to have been and still to be, for the world, for the whole church, all necessary, all equally necessary; but that at present, and for the majority of Christians born in Christian countries, I believe the third and the fourth evidences to be the most operative, not as superseding, but as involving a glad undoubting faith in the two former. *Credidi, ideóque intellexi*, appears to me the dictate equally of philosophy and religion, even as I believe redemption to be the antecedent of sanctification, and not its consequent. All spiritual predicates may be construed indifferently as modes of action or as states of being. Thus holiness and blessedness are the same idea, now seen in relation to act and now to existence. The ready belief which has been yielded to the slander of my “potential infidelity,” I attribute in part to the openness with which I have avowed my doubts, whether the heavy interdict under which the name of Benedict de Spinoza lies is merited on the whole or to the whole extent. Be this as it may, I wish, however, that I could find in the books of philosophy, theoretical or moral, which are alone

\* John 7, 17.



recommended to the present students of theology in our established schools, a few passages as thoroughly Pauline, as completely accordant with the doctrines of the established Church, as the following sentences in the concluding page of Spinoza's Ethics:—*Deinde quò mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine magis gaudet, eò plus intelligit, eò majorem in affectus habet potentiam, et eò minus ab affectibus, qui mali sunt, patitur: atque adeò ex eo, quòd mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine gaudet, potestatem habet libidines coercendi, nemo beatitudine gaudet quia affectus coercuit; sed contra potestas libidines coercendi ex ipsâ beatitudine oritur.*

With regard to the Unitarians, it has been shamelessly asserted that I have denied them to be Christians. God forbid! For how should I know what the piety of the heart may be, or what *quantum* of error in the understanding may consist with a saving faith in the intentions and actual dispositions of the whole moral being in any one individual? Never will God reject a soul that sincerely loves Him, be his speculative opinions what they may: and whether in any given instance certain opinions, be they unbelief or misbelief, are compatible with a sincere love of God, God only can know. But this I have said, and shall continue to say: that if the doctrines, the sum of which I *believe* to constitute the truth in Christ, be Christianity, then Unitarianism is not, and *vice versâ*: and that in speaking theologically and *impersonally*, i.e., of Psilanthropism and Theanthropism as schemes of belief, without reference to individuals who profess either the one or the other, it will be absurd to use a different language as long as it is the dictate of common sense that two opposites cannot properly be called by the same name. I should feel no offence if a Unitarian applied the same to me, any more than if he were to say that two and two being four, four and four must be eight:

ἄλλὰ βροτῶν  
τὸν μὲν κενεόφρονες αἰχμαί  
ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἔβαλον.  
τὸν δ' αὖ καταμεμψέντ' ἄγαν  
ἰσχὺν οἰκείων παρέσφαλεν καλῶν,  
χειρὸς ἔλκων ἐπίσσω, θυμὸς ἀτολμος ἑών.

PINDAR. Nem. Ode xi.

This has been my object, and this alone can be my defence—and O! that with this my personal as well as my LITERARY LIFE might conclude! the unquenched desire I mean, not without the consciousness of having earnestly endeavoured to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptations of scorners, by showing that the scheme of Christianity, as taught in the liturgy

and homilies of our Church, though not discoverable by human reason, is yet in accordance with it; that link follows link by necessary consequence; that religion passes out of the ken of reason only where the eye of reason has reached its own horizon; and that Faith is then but its continuation: even as the day softens away into the sweet twilight, and twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the darkness. It is night, sacred night! the upraised eye views only the starry heaven which manifests itself alone: and the outward beholding is fixed on the sparks twinkling in the awful depth, though suns of other worlds, only to preserve the soul steady and collected in its pure act of inward adoration to the great I AM, and to the filial WORD that re-affirmeth it from Eternity to Eternity, whose choral echo is the universe.

ΘΕΩ. ΜΟΝΩ. ΔΟΞΑ.

## LAY SERMONS.

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- I. THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL.
- II. BLESSED ARE YE THAT SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS.



THE  
STATESMAN'S MANUAL;

OR,

THE BIBLE THE BEST GUIDE TO POLITICAL  
SKILL AND FORESIGHT:

A Lay Sermon,

ADDRESSED TO THE HIGHER CLASSES OF SOCIETY,

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

COMMENTS AND ESSAYS CONNECTED WITH THE  
STUDY OF THE INSPIRED WRITINGS.

BY

S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

*Ad isthæc quæro vos, quæliacunque primo videantur aspectu, attendite, ut qui vobis  
forsan insanire videar, saltem quibus insaniam rationibus cognoscatis."*

LONDON.

1816.



# A LAY SERMON

&c.

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## PSALM LXXVIII. v. 5, 6, 7.

V. 5. For he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel: which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children. 6. That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: 7. That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God.

**I**F our whole knowledge and information concerning the Bible had been confined to the one fact of its immediate derivation from God, we should still presume that it contained rules and assistances for all conditions of men under all circumstances; and therefore for communities no less than for individuals. The contents of every work must correspond to the character and designs of the work-master; and the inference in the present case is too obvious to be overlooked, too plain to be resisted. It requires, indeed, all the might of superstition to conceal from a man of common understanding the further truth, that the interment of such a treasure in a dead language must needs be contrary to the intentions of the gracious Donor. Apostacy itself dared not question the premises, and that the practical consequence did not follow, is conceivable only under a complete system of delusion, which from the cradle to the death-bed ceases not to over-awe the will by obscure fears, while it pre-occupies the senses by vivid imagery and ritual pantomime. But to such a scheme all forms of sophistry are native. The very excellence of the Giver has been made a reason for withholding the gift; nay, the transcendent value of the gift itself assigned as the motive of its detention. We may be shocked at the presumption, but need not be surprised at the fact, that a jealous priesthood should have ventured to represent the applicability of the Bible to all the wants and occasions of men as a wax-like pliability to all their fancies and prepossessions. Faithful guardians of Holy Writ! they are constrained to make it useless in order to guard it from profanation; and those whom they have most defrauded are the readiest to justify the fraud. For imposture, organized into a comprehensive and self-consistent whole,

forms a world of its own, in which inversion becomes the order of nature.

Let it not be forgotten, however (and I recommend the fact to the especial attention of those among ourselves who are disposed to rest contented with an implicit faith and passive acquiescence), that the church of superstition never ceased to avow the profoundest reverence for the Scriptures themselves, and what it forbids its vassals to ascertain, it not only permits, but commands them to take for granted.

Whether, and to what extent, this suspension of the rational functions, this spiritual slumber, will be imputed as a sin to the souls who are still under chains of papal darkness, we are neither enabled or authorized to determine. It is enough for us to know that the land in which we abide has like another Goshen been severed from the plague, and that we have light in *our* dwellings. The road of salvation for us is a high road, and the way-farers, though "simple, need not err therein." The Gospel lies open in the market-place, and on every window seat, so that (virtually at least) the deaf may hear the words of the Book! It is preached at every turning, so that the blind may see them. (Isai. xxix. 18.) The circumstances then being so different, if the result should prove similar, we may be quite certain that we shall not be held guiltless. The ignorance, which may be the excuse of others, will be our crime. Our birth and denizenship in an enlightened and protestant land will, with all our rights and franchises to boot, be brought in judgment against us, and stand first in the fearful list of blessings abused. The glories of our country will form the blazonry of our own impeachment, and the very name of Englishmen, which we are almost all of us too proud of, and scarcely any of us enough thankful for, will be annexed to that of Christians only to light up our shame, and aggravate our condemnation.

I repeat, therefore, that the habitual unreflectingness, which in certain countries may be susceptible of more or less palliation in most instances, can in this country be deemed blameless in none. The humblest and least educated of our countrymen must have wilfully neglected the inestimable privileges, secured to all alike, if he has not himself found, if he has not from his own personal experience discovered, the sufficiency of the Scriptures in all knowledge requisite for a right performance of his duty as a man and a Christian (see Appendix A.). Of the labouring classes, who in all countries form the great majority of the inhabitants, more than this is not demanded, more than this is not perhaps generally desirable—"They are not sought for in public



counsel, nor need they be found where politic sentences are spoken. It is enough if every one is wise in the working of his own craft: so best will they maintain the state of the world."

But you, my friends, to whom the following pages are more particularly addressed, as to men moving in the higher class of society:—You will, I hope, have availed yourselves of the ampler means entrusted to you by God's providence, to a more extensive study and a wider use of His revealed will and word. From you we have a right to expect a sober and meditative accommodation to your own times and country of those important truths declared in the inspired writings "for a thousand generations," and of the awful examples, belonging to all ages, by which those truths are at once illustrated and confirmed. Would you feel conscious that you had shown yourselves unequal to your station in society—would you stand degraded in your own eyes, if you betrayed an utter want of information respecting the acts of human sovereigns and legislators? And should you not much rather be both ashamed and afraid to know yourselves in conversant with the acts and constitutions of God, whose law executeth itself, and whose Word is the foundation, the power, and the life of the universe? Do you hold it a requisite of your rank to show yourselves inquisitive concerning the expectations and plans of statesmen and state-councillors? Do you excuse it as natural curiosity, that you lend a listening ear to the guesses of state gazers, to the dark hints and open revilings of our self-inspired state fortune-tellers, "the wizards that peep and mitter" and forecast, alarmists by trade, and malcontents for their bread? And should you not feel a deeper interest in predictions which are permanent prophecies, because they are at the same time eternal truths? Predictions which in containing the grounds of fulfilment involve the principles of foresight, and teach the science of the future in its perpetual elements?

But I will struggle to believe that of those whom I now suppose myself addressing, there are few who have not so employed their greater leisure and superior advantages as to render these remarks, if not wholly superfluous, yet personally inapplicable. In common with your worldly inferiors, you will indeed have directed your main attention to the promises and the information conveyed in the records of the Evangelists and Apostles; promises, that need only a lively trust in them, on our own part, to be the means as well as the pledges of our eternal welfare! information that opens out to our knowledge a kingdom that is not of this world, thrones that cannot be shaken, and sceptres that can neither be broken nor

transferred! Yet not the less on this account will you have looked back with a proportionate interest on the temporal destinies of men and nations, stored up for our instruction in the archives of the Old Testament: not the less will you delight to retrace the paths by which Providence has led the kingdoms of this world through the valley of mortal life—paths engraved with the foot-marks of captains sent forth from the God of armies! Nations in whose guidance or chastisement the arm of Omnipotence itself was made bare.

Recent occurrences have given additional strength and fresh force to our sage poet's eulogy on the Jewish prophets:

"As men divinely taught and better teaching  
The solid rules of civil government  
In their majestic unaffected style,  
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.  
In them is plainest taught and easiest learnt  
What makes a nation happy and keeps it so,  
What ruins kingdoms and lays cities flat."

PARADISE REGAINED, iv. 354.

If there be any antidote to that restless craving for the wonders of the day, which in conjunction with the appetite for publicity is spreading like an efflorescence on the surface of our national character; if there exist means for deriving resignation from general discontent, means of building up with the very materials of political gloom that steadfast frame of hope which affords the only certain shelter from the throng of self-realizing alarms, at the same time that it is the natural home and workshop of all the active virtues; that antidote and these means must be sought for in the collation of the present with the past, in the habit of thoughtfully assimilating the events of our own age to those of the time before us. If this be a moral advantage derivable from history in general, rendering its study therefore a moral duty for such as possess the opportunities of books, leisure and education, it would be inconsistent even with the name of believers not to recur with pre-eminent interest to events and revolutions, the records of which are as much distinguished from all other history by their especial claims to divine authority, as the facts themselves were from all other facts by especial manifestation of divine interference. "Whatsoever things," saith St. Paul (Romans xv. 4) "were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

In the infancy of the world, signs and wonders were requisite in order to startle and break down that superstition, idolatrous in itself and the source of all other idolatry, which tempts the natu-

ral man to seek the true cause and origin of public calamities in outward circumstances, persons and incidents: in agents, therefore, that were themselves but surges of the same tide, passive conductors of the one invisible influence, under which the total host of billows, in the whole line of successive impulse, swell and roll shoreward; there finally, each in its turn, to strike, roar, and be dissipated.

But with each miracle worked there was a truth revealed, which thenceforward was to act as its substitute: and if we think the Bible less applicable to us on account of the miracles, we degrade ourselves into mere slaves of sense and fancy, which are indeed the appointed medium between earth and heaven, but for that very cause stand in a desirable relation to spiritual truth then only, when, as a mere and passive medium, they yield a free passage to its light. It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. Reason and religion (Appendix B.) are their own evidence. The natural Sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception.

Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances co-exist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings render miracles superfluous: and if we neglect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion. "A wicked and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:" that is, a threatening call to repentance. (Appendix C.) Equally applicable and prophetic will the following versés be: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here." For have we not divine assurance that Christ is with His church, even to the end of the world? And what could the queen of the south, or the men of Nineveh have beheld, that could enter into competition with the events of

our own times, in importance, in splendour, or even in strangeness and significance?

The true origin of human events is so little susceptible of that kind of evidence which can compel our belief; so many are the disturbing forces which in every cycle or ellipse of changes modify the motion given by the first projection; and every age has, or imagines it has, its own circumstances which render past experience no longer applicable to the present case; that there will never be wanting answers, and explanations, and specious flatteries of hope to persuade a people and its government that the history of the past is inapplicable to their case. And no wonder, if we read history for the facts instead of reading it for the sake of the general principles, which are to the facts as the root and sap of a tree to its leaves: and no wonder, if history so read should find a dangerous rival in novels, nay, if the latter should be preferred to the former on the score even of probability. I well remember, that when the examples of former Jacobins, as Julius Cæsar, Cromwell, and the like, were adduced in France and England at the commencement of the French Consulate, it was ridiculed as pedantry and pedant's ignorance to fear a repetition of usurpation and military despotism at the close of the enlightened eighteenth century! Even so, in the very dawn of the late tempestuous day, when the revolutions of Corcyra, the proscriptions of the Reformers, Marius, Cæsar, &c., and the direful effects of the leveling tenets in the Peasants' War in Germany (differenced from the tenets of the first French constitution only by the mode of wording them, the figures of speech being borrowed in the one instance from theology, and in the other from modern metaphysics), were urged on the Convention, and its vindicators; the Magi of the day, the true citizens of the world, the *plusquam-perfecti* of patriotism, gave us set proofs that similar results were impossible, and that it was an insult to so philosophical an age, to so enlightened a nation, to dare direct the public eye towards them as to lights of warning! Alas! like lights in the stern of a vessel they illumined the path only that had been passed over!

The politic Florentine\* has observed, that there are brains of three races. The one understands of itself; the other understands as much as is shown it by others; the third neither understands of itself, nor what is shown it by others. In our times there are more perhaps who belong to the third class from vanity

\* Sono di tre generazioni cervelli: l'uno intende per se; l'altro intende quanto da altri gli è mostro; e il terzo non intende né per se stesso né per dimostrazione d'altri.

MACHIAVELLI.

and acquired frivolity of mind, than from natural incapacity. It is no uncommon foible with those who are honoured with the acquaintance of the great, to attribute national events to particular persons, particular measures, to the errors of one man, to the intrigues of another, to any possible spark of a particular occasion, rather than to the true proximate cause (and which alone deserves the name of a cause), the predominant state of public opinion. And still less are they inclined to refer the latter to the ascendancy of speculative principles, and the scheme or mode of thinking in vogue. I have known men, who with significant nods and the pitying contempt of smiles, have denied all influence to the corruptions of moral and political philosophy, and with much solemnity have proceeded to solve the riddle of the French Revolution by anecdotes! Yet it would not be difficult, by an unbroken chain of historic facts, to demonstrate that the most important changes in the commercial relations of the world had their origin in the closets or lonely walks of uninterested theorists;—that the mighty epochs of commerce, that have changed the face of empires, nay, the most important of those discoveries and improvements in the mechanic arts, which have numerically increased our population beyond what the wisest statesmen of Elizabeth's reign deemed possible, and again doubled this population virtually; the most important, I say, of those inventions that in their results

————— best uphold  
War by her two main nerves, iron and gold,

had their origin not in the cabinets of statesmen, or in the practical insight of men of business, but in the closets of uninterested theorists, in the visions of recluse genius. To the immense majority of men, even in civilized countries, speculative philosophy has ever been, and must ever remain, a *terra incognita*. Yet it is not the less true, that all the epoch-forming revolutions of the Christian world, the revolutions of religion and with them the civil, social, and domestic habits of the nations concerned, have coincided with the rise and fall of metaphysical systems. So few are the minds that really govern the machine of society, and so incomparably more numerous and more important are the indirect consequences of things than their foreseen and direct effects.

It is with nations as with individuals. In tranquil moods and peaceable times we are quite practical. Facts only and cool common sense are then in fashion. But let the winds of passion

swell, and straightway men begin to generalize; to connect by remotest analogies; to express the most universal positions of reason in the most glowing figures of fancy; in short, to feel particular truths and mere facts, as poor, cold, narrow, and incommensurate with their feelings.

The Apostle of the Gentiles quoted from a Greek comic poet. Let it not then be condemned as unseasonable or out of place, if I remind you that in the intuitive knowledge of this truth, and with his wonted fidelity to nature, our own great poet has placed the greater number of his profoundest maxims and general truths, both political and moral, not in the mouths of men at ease, but of men under the influence of passion, when the mighty thoughts over-master and become the tyrants of the mind that has brought them forth. In his *Lear*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, principles of deepest insight and widest interest fly off like sparks from the glowing iron under the loud anvil. It seems a paradox only to the unthinking, and it is a fact that none but the unread in history will deny, that in periods of popular tumult and innovation the more abstract a notion is, the more readily has it been found to combine, the closer has appeared its affinity, with the feelings of a people and with all their immediate impulses to action. At the commencement of the French Revolution, in the remotest villages every tongue was employed in echoing and enforcing the almost geometrical abstractions of the physiocratic politicians and economists. The public roads were crowded with armed enthusiasts disputing on the inalienable sovereignty of the people, the imprescriptible laws of the pure reason, and the universal constitution, which, as rising out of the nature and rights of man as man, all nations alike were under the obligation of adopting. Turn over the fugitive writings, that are still extant, of the age of Luther; peruse the pamphlets and loose sheets that came out in flights during the reign of Charles the First and the Republic; and you will find in these one continued comment on the aphorism of Lord Chancellor Bacon (a man assuredly sufficiently acquainted with the extent of secret and personal influence), that the knowledge of the speculative principles of men in general between the age of twenty and thirty, is the one great source of political prophecy. And Sir Philip Sidney regarded the adoption of one set of principles in the Netherlands as a proof of the divine agency and the fountain of all the events and successes of that revolution.

A calm and detailed examination of the facts justifies me to my own mind in hazarding the bold assertion, that the fearful

blunders of the late dread revolution, and all the calamitous mistakes of its opponents, from its commencement even to the era of loftier principles and wiser measures (an era that began with, and ought to be named from, the war of the Spanish and Portuguese insurgents), every failure with all its gloomy results, may be unanswerably deduced from the neglect of some maxim or other that had been established by clear reasoning and plain facts in the writings of Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, Bacon, or Harrington. These are red-letter names even in the almanacs of worldly wisdom: and yet I dare challenge all the critical benches of infidelity to point out any one important truth, any one efficient, practical direction or warning, which did not pre-exist, and for the most part in a sounder, more intelligible, and more comprehensive form, in the Bible.

In addition to this, the Hebrew legislator, and the other inspired poets, prophets, historians and moralists of the Jewish church have two immense advantages in their favour. First, their particular rules and prescripts flow directly and visibly from universal principles, as from a fountain: they flow from principles and ideas that are not so properly said to be confirmed by reason as to be reason itself. Principles, in act and procession, disjoined from which, and from the emotions that inevitably accompany the actual intuition of their truth, the widest maxims of prudence are like arms without hearts, muscles without nerves. Secondly, from the very nature of these principles, as taught in the Bible, they are understood in exact proportion as they are believed and felt. The regulator is never separated from the main spring. For the words of the apostle are literally and philosophically true: We (that is, the human race) live by faith. Whatever we do or know, that in kind is different from the brute creation, has its origin in a determination of the reason to have faith and trust in itself. This, its first act of faith is scarcely less than identical with its own being. *Implicitè*, it is the copula—it contains the possibility—of every position, to which there exists any correspondence in reality. It is itself, therefore, the realizing principle, the spiritual substratum of the whole complex body of truths. This primal act of faith is enunciated in the word, GOD: a faith not derived from experience, but its ground and source, and without which the fleeting chaos of facts would no more form experience, than the dust of the grave can of itself make a living man. The imperative and oracular form of the inspired Scripture is the form of reason itself in all things purely rational and moral.

If it be the word of Divine Wisdom, we might anticipate that it would in all things be distinguished from other books, as the Supreme Reason, whose knowledge is creative, and antecedent to the things known, is distinguished from the understanding, or creaturely mind of the individual, the acts of which are posterior to the things it records and arranges. Man alone was created in the image of God: a position groundless and inexplicable, if the reason in man do not differ from the understanding. For this the inferior animals (many at least) possess in degree: and assuredly the divine image or idea is not a thing of degrees.

Hence it follows that what is expressed in the inspired writings, is implied in all absolute science. The latter whispers what the former utter as with the voice of a trumpet. As sure as God liveth, is the pledge and assurance of every positive truth, that is asserted by the reason. The human understanding musing on many things, snatches at truth, but is frustrated and disheartened by the fluctuating nature of its objects;\* its conclusions therefore are timid and uncertain, and it hath no way of giving permanence to things but by reducing them to abstractions: hardly (saith the author of the "Wisdom of Solomon," of whose words the preceding sentence is a paraphrase), hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but all certain knowledge is in the power of God, and a presence from above. So only have the ways of men been reformed, and every doctrine that contains a saving truth, and all acts pleasing to God (in other words, all actions consonant with human nature, in its original intention), are through wisdom: that is the rational spirit of man.

This, then, is the prerogative of the Bible; this is the privilege of its believing students. With them the principle of knowledge is likewise a spring and principle of action. And as it is the only certain knowledge, so are the actions that flow from it the only ones on which a secure reliance can be placed. The understanding may suggest motives, may avail itself of motives, and make judicious conjectures respecting the probable consequences of actions. But the knowledge taught in the Scriptures produces the motives, involves the consequences; and its highest formula is still: As sure as God liveth, so will it be unto thee! Strange

\* Ποταμὸς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἑμβῆναι δις τῷ αὐτῷ καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, οὔτε θνητῆς οὐσίας δις εἰσάσθαι κατὰ ἕξιν· ἀλλὰ δεύτην καὶ τρίτην τῆς μεταβολῆς σκιδνοῦσι καὶ πάλιν συνάγει, μάλλον δὲ οὐδὲ πάλιν οὐδὲ ὑστερον ἀλλ'

ἅμα συνίσταται καὶ ἀπολείπει, καὶ πρόβεισι καὶ ἀπεισι ὅθεν οὐδ' εἰς τὸ εἶναι περαίνει τὸ γεγονόμενον αὐτῆς τῷ μηδέποτε λήγειν μηδ' ἵστασθαι τὴν γένεσιν. — PLUTARCH, *Εἰκὼν Ηουλ.* cap. xviii. Vol. ix. p. 239.



as this position will appear to such as forget that motives can be causes only in a secondary and improper sense, inasmuch as the man makes the motive, not the motive the man; and that the same thought shall be a motive to one man and no motive to his neighbour; (a sufficient proof that the motives themselves are effects, the principle of which, good or evil, lies far deeper)—matter for scorn and insult though this position will furnish to those, who think (or try to think) every man out of his senses who has not lost his reason (or alienated it by wilful sophistry, demanding reasons for reason itself), yet all history bears evidence to its truth. The sense of expediency, the cautious balancing of comparative advantages, the constant wakefulness to the *cui bono*?—in connection with the *quid mihi*?—all these are in their places in the routine of conduct, by which the individual provides for himself the real or supposed wants of to-day and to-morrow: and in quiet times and prosperous circumstances a nation presents an aggregate of such individuals, a busy ant-hill in calm and sunshine. By the happy organization of a well-governed society, the contradictory interests of ten millions of such individuals may neutralize each other, and be reconciled in the unity of the national interest. But whence did this happy organization first come?—Was it a tree transplanted from Paradise, with all its branches in full fruitage?—Or was it sowed in sunshine?—Was it in vernal breezes and gentle rains that it fixed its roots, and grew and strengthened? Let history answer these questions! With blood was it planted—it was rocked in tempests—the goat, the ass, and the stag gnawed it—the wild boar has whetted his tusks on its bark. The deep scars are still extant on its trunk, and the path of the lightning may be traced among its higher branches. And even after its full growth, in the season of its strength, “when its height reached to the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth,” the whirlwind has more than once forced its stately top to touch the ground: it has been bent like a bow, and sprang back like a shaft. Mightier powers were at work than expediency ever yet called up!—yea, mightier than the mere understanding can comprehend! One confirmation of the latter assertion you may find in the history of our country, written by the same Scotch philosopher, who devoted his life to the undermining of the Christian religion; and expended his last breath in a blasphemous regret that he had not survived it!—by the same heartless sophist who, in this island, was the main pioneer of that atheistic philosophy, which in France transvenomed the natural thirst of truth into the hydrophobia of a wild and

homeless scepticism; the Elias of that Spirit of Antichrist, which

— still promising  
Freedom, itself too sensual to be free,  
Poisons life's amities and cheats the soul  
Of faith, and quiet hope and all that lifts  
And all that soothes the spirit!

This inadequacy of the mere understanding to the apprehension of moral greatness we may trace in this historian's cool systematic attempt to steal away every feeling of reverence for every great name by a scheme of motives, in which as often as possible the efforts and enterprises of heroic spirits are attributed to this or that paltry view of the most despicable selfishness. But in the majority of instances this would have been too palpably false and slanderous: and therefore the founders and martyrs of our church and constitution, of our civil and religious liberty, are represented as fanatics and bewildered enthusiasts. But histories incomparably more authentic than Mr. Hume's (nay, spite of himself even his own history), confirm by irrefragable evidence the aphorism of ancient wisdom, that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. For what is enthusiasm but the oblivion and swallowing-up of self in an object dearer than self, or in an idea more vivid?—How this is produced in the enthusiasm of wickedness, I have explained in the third comment annexed to this discourse. But in the genuine enthusiasm of morals, religion, and patriotism, this enlargement and elevation of the soul above its mere self attest the presence, and accompany the intuition of ultimate principles alone. These alone can interest the undegraded human spirit deeply and enduringly, because these alone belong to its essence, and will remain with it permanently.

Notions, the depthless abstractions of fleeting phenomena, the shadows of sailing vapours, the colourless repetitions of rainbows, have effected their utmost when they have added to the distinctness of our knowledge. For this very cause they are of themselves adverse to lofty emotion, and it requires the influence of a light and warmth, not their own, to make them crystallize into a semblance of growth. But every principle is actualized by an idea; and every idea is living, productive, partaketh of infinity, and (as Bacon has sublimely observed) containeth an endless power of semination. Hence it is, that science, which consists wholly in ideas and principles, is power. *Scientia et potentia* (saith the same philosopher) *in idem coincidunt*. Hence too it is, that notions, linked arguments, reference to particular facts and calculations of prudence, influence only the comparatively few.

the men of leisurely minds who have been trained up to them: and even these few they influence but faintly. But for the reverse, I appeal to the general character of the doctrines which have collected the most numerous sects, and acted upon the moral being of the converts, with a force that might well seem supernatural! The great principles of our religion, the sublime ideas spoken out everywhere in the Old and New Testament, resemble the fixed stars, which appear of the same size to the naked as to the armed eye; the magnitude of which the telescope may rather seem to diminish than to increase. At the annunciation of principles, of ideas, the soul of man awakes, and starts up, as an exile in a far distant land at the unexpected sounds of his native language, when after long years of absence, and almost of oblivion, he is suddenly addressed in his own mother-tongue. He weeps for joy, and embraces the speaker as his brother. How else can we explain the fact so honourable to Great Britain, and the poorest\* amongst us will contend with as much enthusiasm as the richest for the rights of property? These rights are the spheres and necessary conditions of free agency. But free agency contains the idea of the free will; and in this he intuitively knows the sublimity, and the infinite hopes, fears, and capabilities of his own nature. On what other ground but the cognateness of ideas and principles to man as man, does the nameless soldier rush to the combat in defence of the liberties or the honour of his country? Even men woefully neglectful of the precepts of religion will shed their blood for its truth.

Alas!—the main hindrance to the use of the Scriptures, as your manual, lies in the notion that you are already acquainted with its contents. Something *new* must be presented to you, wholly new and wholly out of yourselves; for whatever is within us must be as old as the first dawn of human reason. Truths of all others the most awful and mysterious and at the same time of universal interest, are considered as so true as to lose all the powers of truth, and lie bedridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side, with the most despised and exploded errors. But it should not be so with you! The pride of education, the sense of consistency, should preclude the objection: for would you not be ashamed to apply it to the works of Tacitus, or of Shakespeare? Above all, the rank which you hold, the influence you possess, the powers you may be called to wield, give a special unfitness to this frivo-

\* The reader will remember the anecdote told with so much humour in Goldsmith's Essay. But this is not the first instance where the mind in its hour of meditation finds

matter of admiration and elevating thought, in circumstances that in a different mood had excited its mirth.

lous craving for novelty. To find no contradiction in the union of old and new, to contemplate the Ancient of Days, His words and His works, with a feeling as fresh as if they were now first springing forth at His fiat—this characterizes the minds that feel the riddle of the world and may help to unravel it! This, most of all things, will raise you above the mass of mankind, and therefore will best entitle and qualify you to guide and control them! You say, you are already familiar with the Scriptures. With the words, perhaps, but in any other sense you might as wisely boast of your familiar acquaintance with the rays of the sun, and under that pretence turn away your eyes from the light of Heaven.

Or would you wish for authorities?—for great examples? You may find them in the writings of Thuanus, of Lord Clarendon, of Sir Thomas More, of Raleigh; and in the life and letters of the heroic Gustavus Adolphus. But these, though eminent statesmen were Christians, and might lie under the thralldom of habit and prejudice. I will refer you then to the authorities of two great men, both pagans; but removed from each other by many centuries, and not more distant in their ages than in their characters and situations. The first shall be that of Heraclitus, the sad and recluse philosopher. Πολυμαθὴν νόον οὐ διδάσκει Σιβυλλὰ δὲ μαινομένη στόματι ἀγέλαστα καὶ ἀκαλλώπιστα καὶ ἀμύριστα φθεγγομένη χιλιῶν ἐτῶν ἐξικνέται τῇ φωνῇ διὰ τὸν θεόν.\* Shall we hesitate to apply to the prophets of God, what could be affirmed of the Sibyls by a philosopher whom Socrates, the prince of philosophers, venerated for the profundity of his wisdom?

For the other, I will refer you to the darling of the polished court of Augustus, to the man whose works have been in all ages deemed the models of good sense, and are still the pocket companions of those who pride themselves on uniting the scholar with the gentleman. This accomplished man of the world has given an account of the subjects of conversation between the illustrious statesmen who governed, and the brightest luminaries who then adorned, the empire of the civilized world:

*Sermo oritur non de villis domibusve alienis  
Nec, male, necne Lepus saltet. Sed quod magis ad nos  
Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitur: utrumne  
Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati?  
Et quod sit natura boni? summumque quid ejus?†*

*Horat. Sermon. L. II. Sat. 6, v. 71.*

\* TRANSLATION.—Multiscience (or a variety and quantity of acquired knowledge) does not teach intelligence. But the Sibyl with wild enthusiastic mouth shrilling forth unbirthful, inornate, and unperfumed truths,

reaches to a thousand years, with her voice through the power of God.

† TRANSLATION.—Conversation arises not concerning the country seats or families of strangers in a neighbourhood, or whether the

Berkeley indeed asserts, and is supported in his assertion by the great statesmen, Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh, that without an habitual interest in these subjects a man may be a dexterous intriguer, but never can be a statesman.

But do you require some one or more particular passage from the Bible, that may at once illustrate and exemplify its applicability to the changes and fortunes of empires? Of the numerous chapters that relate to the Jewish tribes, their enemies and allies, before and after their division into two kingdoms, it would be more difficult to state a single one, from which some guiding light might *not* be struck. And in nothing is Scriptural history more strongly contrasted with the histories of highest note in the present age, than in its freedom from the hollowness of abstractions. While the latter present a shadow-fight of things and quantities, the former gives us the history of men, and balances the important influence of individual minds with the previous state of the national morals and manners, in which, as constituting a specific susceptibility, it presents to us the true cause both of the influence itself, and of the weal or woe that were its consequents. How should it be otherwise? The histories and political economy of the present and preceding century partake in the general contagion of its mechanic philosophy, and are the product of an unenlivened generalizing understanding. In the Scriptures they are the living educts of the imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the reason in images of the sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths of which they are the conductors. These are the wheels which Ezekiel beheld, when the hand of the Lord was upon him, and he saw visions of God as he sate among the captives by the river of Chebar. "Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, the wheels went, and thither was their spirit to go: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels also." (Ezekiel i. 20.) The truths and the symbols that represent them move in conjunction and form the living chariot that bears up (for us) the throne of the Divine Humanity. Hence, by a derivative, indeed, but not a divided influence, and though in a secondary yet in more than a metaphorical sense, the Sacred

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dancing hare performed well or ill. But we discuss what more nearly concerns us, and which it is an evil not to know: whether men are made happy by wealth or by virtue? In

what consists the nature of good? And what is the supreme good, and to be our ultimate aim?

Book is worthily entitled the Word of God. Hence too, its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as life and a symbol of Eternity, inasmuch as the past and the future are virtually contained in the present. According therefore to our relative position on its banks the Sacred History becomes prophetic, the Sacred Prophecies historical, while the power and substance of both inhere in its laws, its promises, and its comminations. In the Scriptures therefore both facts and persons must of necessity have a twofold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and a perpetual, a particular and a universal application. They must be at once portraits and ideals.

*Eheu ! paupertina philosophia in paupertinam religionem ducit :—*  
 A hunger-bitten and idealess philosophy naturally produces a starveling and comfortless religion. It is among the miseries of the present age that it recognises no medium between literal and metaphorical. Faith is either to be buried in the dead letter, or its name and honours usurped by a counterfeit product of the mechanical understanding, which in the blindness of self-complacency confounds symbols with allegories. Now an allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses; the principal being more worthless even than its phantom proxy, both alike unsubstantial, and the former shapeless to boot. On the other hand a symbol (*ὁ ἕστιν αἰὲν ταυτηγόρικον*) is characterized by a translucence of the special in the individual, or of the general in the especial, or of the universal in the general. Above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal. It always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity, of which it is the representative. The other are but empty echoes which the fancy arbitrarily associates with apparitions of matter, less beautiful but not less shadowy than the sloping orchard or hill-side pasture-field seen in the transparent lake below. Alas for the flocks that are to be led forth to such pastures! "It shall even be as when the hungry dreameth, and behold! he eateth; but he waketh and his soul is empty: or as when the thirsty dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh and is faint!" (Isaiah xxix. 8.) O! that we would seek for the bread which was given from heaven, that we should eat thereof and be strengthened! O that we would draw at the well at which the flocks of our forefathers had living water drawn for them, even the water which, instead of mocking the thirst of

him to whom it is given, becomes a well within himself springing up to life everlasting!

When we reflect how large a part of our present knowledge and civilization is owing, directly or indirectly, to the Bible; when we are compelled to admit, as a fact of history, that the Bible has been the main lever by which the moral and intellectual character of Europe has been raised to its present comparative height; we should be struck, methinks, by the marked and prominent difference of this book from the works which it is now the fashion to quote as guides and authorities in morals, politics, and history. I will point out a few of the excellencies by which the one is distinguished, and shall leave it to your own judgment and recollection to perceive and apply the contrast to the productions of highest name in these latter days. In the Bible every agent appears and acts as a self-subsisting individual: each has a life of its own, and yet all are one life. The elements of necessity and free-will are reconciled in the higher power of an omnipresent Providence, that predestinates the whole in the moral freedom of the integral parts. Of this the Bible never suffers us to lose sight. The root is never detached from the ground. It is God everywhere: and all creatures conform to His decrees, the righteous by performance of the law, the disobedient by the sufferance of the penalty.

Suffer me to inform or remind you that there is a threefold, necessity. There is a logical and there is a mathematical necessity; but the latter is always hypothetical, and both subsist formally only, not in any real object. Only by the intuition and immediate spiritual consciousness of the idea of God, as the One and Absolute, at once the Ground and the Cause, who alone containeth in Himself the ground of His own nature, and therein of all natures, do we arrive at the third, which alone is a real objective necessity. Here the immediate consciousness decides: the idea is its own evidence, and is insusceptible of all other. It is necessarily groundless and indemonstrable; because it is itself the ground of all possible demonstration. The reason hath faith in itself, in its own revelations. 'Ο λόγος ἑφῆ. *Ipse dixit!* So it is: for it is so! All the necessity of casual relations (which the mere understanding reduces, and must reduce, to co-existence and regular succession \* in the objects of which they are predicated, and to habit and association in the mind predicated) depends on or rather inheres in, the idea of the omnipresent and absolute: for

\* See Hume's Essays. The sophist evades, of the predicament, which is not "præire" as Cicero long ago remarked, the better half but "*efficienter præire*."

this it is, in which the possible is one and the same with the real and the necessary. Herein the Bible differs from all the books of Greek philosophy, and in a twofold manner. It doth not affirm a Divine Nature only, but a God: and not a God only, but the living God. Hence, in the Scriptures alone is the *Jus divinum*, or direct relation of the state and its magistracy to the Supreme Being, taught as a vital and indispensable part of all moral and of all political wisdom, even as the Jewish alone was a true theocracy.

But I refer to the demand. Were it my object to touch on the present state of public affairs in this kingdom, or on the prospective measures in agitation respecting our sister island, I would direct your most serious meditations to the latter period of the reign of Solomon, and to the revolutions in the reign of Rehoboam, his successor. But I should tread on glowing embers. I will turn to a subject on which all men of reflection are at length in agreement—the causes of the revolution and fearful chastisement of France. We have learned to trace them back to the rising importance of the commercial and manufacturing class, and its incompatibility with the old feudal privileges and prescriptions; to the spirit of sensuality and ostentation, which from the court had spread through all the towns and cities of the empire; to the predominance of a presumptuous and irreigious philosophy; to the extreme over-rating of the knowledge and power given by the improvements of the arts and sciences, especially those of astronomy, mechanics, and a wonder-working chemistry; to an assumption of prophetic power, and the general conceit that states and governments might be and ought to be constructed as machines, every movement of which might be foreseen and taken into previous calculation; to the consequent multitude of plans and constitutions, of planners and constitution-makers, and the remorseless arrogance with which the authors and proselytes of every new proposal were ready to realize it, be the cost what it might in the established rights, or even in the lives, of men; in short, to restlessness, presumption, sensual indulgence, and the idolatrous reliance on false philosophy in the whole domestic, social, and political life of the stirring and effective part of the community: these all acting at once and together on a mass of materials supplied by the unfeeling extravagance and oppressions of the government, which “showed no mercy, and very heavily laid its yoke.”

Turn then to the chapter from which the last words were cited, and read the following seven verses: and I am deceived if you



will not be compelled to admit that the prophet Isaiah revealed the true philosophy of the French Revolution more than two thousand years before it became a sad irrevocable truth of history. "And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore, hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me! I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day: the loss of children and widowhood; they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; thou hast said, there is no overseer. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know\* from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to put it off; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels; let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee."

There is a grace that would enable us to take up vipers, and the evil thing shall not hurt us: a spiritual alchemy which can transmute poisons into a panacea. We are counselled by our Lord Himself to make unto ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; and in this age of sharp contrasts and grotesque combinations it would be a wise method of sympathizing with the tone and spirit of the times, if we elevated even our daily newspapers and political journals into comments on the Bible.

When I named this essay a sermon, I sought to prepare the inquirers after it for the absence of all the usual softenings suggested by worldly prudence, of all compromise between truth and

\* The reader will scarcely fail to find in this verse a remembrancer of the sudden setting-in of the frost, a fortnight before the usual time (in a country, too, where the commencement of its two seasons is in general scarcely less regular than that of the wet and dry seasons between the tropics) which caused, and the desolation which accompanied, the flight from Moscow. The Russians baffled the physical forces of the im-

perial Jacobin, because they were inaccessible to his imaginary forces. The faith in St. Nicholas kept off at safe distance the more pernicious superstition of the Destinies of Napoleon the Great. The English in the Peninsula overcame the real, because they set at defiance, and had heard only to despise, the imaginary powers of the irresistible Emperor. Thank heaven, the heart of the country was sound at the core.

courtesy. But not even as a sermon would I have addressed the present discourse to a promiscuous audience; and for this reason I likewise announced it in the title-page as exclusively *ad clerum*; i.e., (in the old and wide sense of the word) to men of clerkly acquirements, of whatever profession. I would that the greater part of our publications could be thus directed, each to its appropriate class of readers. But this cannot be. For among other odd burrs and kecksies, the misgrowth of our luxuriant activity, we have now a reading public,\* as strange a phrase, methinks, as ever forced a splenetic smile on the staid countenance of meditation; and yet no fiction! For our readers have, in good truth, multiplied exceedingly, and have waxed proud. It would require the intrepid accuracy of a Colquhoun to venture at the precise number of that vast company only, whose heads and hearts are dieted at the two public ordinaries of literature, the circulating

\* Some participle passive in the diminutive form, *Eruditorum Natio* for instance, might seem at first sight a fuller and more exact designation; but the superior force and humour of the former become evident whenever the phrase occurs as a step or stair in a climax of irony. By way of example take the following sentences transcribed from a work demonstrating that the New Testament was intended exclusively for the primitive converts from Judaism, was accommodated to their prejudices, and is of no authority, as a rule of faith, for Christians in general. "The Reading Public in this Enlightened Age, and Thinking Nation, by its favourable reception of liberal ideas, has long demonstrated the benign influence of that profound Philosophy which has already emancipated us from so many absurd prejudices held in superstitious awe by our deluded forefathers. But the Dark Age yielded at length to the dawning light of reason and common sense at the glorious, though imperfect, Revolution. The people can be no longer duped or scared out of their imprescriptible and inalienable Rights to judge and decide for themselves on all important questions of government and religion. The scholastic jargon of jarring articles and metaphysical creeds may continue for a time to deform our Church-establishment; and like the grotesque figures in the niches of our old gothic cathedrals may serve to remind the nation of its former barbarism; but the universal suffrage of a free and enlightened Public," &c. &c.!

Among the Revolutions worthy of notice, the change in the nature of the introductory sentences and prefatory matter in serious books is not the least striking. The same gross flattery which disgusts us in the dedications to individuals in the elder writers, is now transferred to the nation at large, or the Reading Public: while the Jeremiahs of our

old Moralists, and their angry denunciations concerning the ignorance, immorality, and irreligion of the People, appear (*mutatis mutandis*, and with an appeal to the worst passions, envy, discontent, scorn, vindictiveness, &c.) in the shape of bitter libels on ministers, parliament, the clergy: in short, on the state and church, and all persons employed in them. Likewise, I would point out to the reader's attention the marvellous predominance at present of the words, *idea* and *demonstration*. Every talker now-a-days has an *Idea*; aye, and he will demonstrate it too! A few days ago, I heard one of the Reading Public, a thinking and independent smuggler, euphonize the latter word with much significance, in a tirade against the planners of the late African expedition:—"As to Algiers, any man that has half an idea in his skull, must know, that it has been long ago deymonstered, I should say, deymonstrified, &c." But, the phrase, which occasioned this note, brings to my mind the mistake of a lethargic Dutch traveller, who returning highly gratified from a showman's caravan, which he had been tempted to enter by the words, *The Learned Pig*, gilt on the pannels, met another caravan of a similar shape, with *The Reading Fly* on it, in letters of the same size and splendour. "Why, dis is voonders above voonders!" exclaims the Dutchman, takes his seat as first comer, and soon fatigued by waiting, and by the very hush and intensity of his expectation, gives way to his constitutional somnolence, from which he is roused by the supposed showman at Hounslow, with a "*In what name, sir, was your place taken? Are you booked all the way for Reading?*"—Now a reading public is (to my mind) more marvellous still, and in the third tier of "voonders above voonders."

libraries and the periodical press. But what is the result? Does the inward man thrive on this regimen? Alas! if the average health of the consumers may be judged of by the articles of largest consumption; if the secretions may be conjectured from the ingredients of the dishes that are found best suited to their palates; from all that I have seen, either of the banquet or the guests, I shall utter my *profaccia* with a desponding sigh. From a popular philosophy and a philosophic populace, good sense deliver us!

At present, however, I am to imagine for myself a very different audience. I appeal exclusively to men from whose station and opportunities I may dare anticipate a respectable portion of that "sound book learnedness" into which our old public schools still continue to initiate their pupils. I appeal to men in whom I may hope to find, if not philosophy, yet occasional impulses at least to philosophic thought. And here, as far as my own experience extends, I can announce one favourable symptom. The notion of our measureless superiority in good sense to our ancestors, so general at the commencement of the French Revolution and for some years before it, is out of fashion. We hear, at least, less of the jargon of this enlightened age. After fatiguing itself as performer or spectator in the giddy figure-dance of political changes, Europe has seen the shallow foundations of its self-complacent faith give way; and among men of influence and property, we have now more reason to apprehend the stupor of despondence than the extravagances of hope unsustained by experience, or of self-confidence not bottomed on principle.

In this rank of life the danger lies, not in any tendency to innovation, but in the choice of the means for preventing it. And here my apprehensions point to two opposite errors, each of which deserves a separate notice. The first consists in a disposition to think that, as the peace of nations has been disturbed by the diffusion of a false light, it may be re-established by excluding the people from all knowledge and all prospect of amelioration. O! never, never! Reflection and stirrings of mind, with all their restlessness and all the errors that result from their imperfection, from the too much, because too little, are come into the world. The powers that awaken and foster the spirit of curiosity are to be found in every village: books are in every hovel. The infant's cries are hushed with picture-books; and the cottager's child sheds his first bitter tears over pages, which render it impossible for the man to be treated or governed as a child. Here, as in so many other cases, the inconveniences that have arisen from a thing's having become too general, are best removed by making it universal.

The other and contrary mistake proceeds from the assumption that a national education will have been realized whenever the people at large have been taught to read and write. Now, among the many means to the desired end, this is doubtless one, and not the least important. But neither is it the most so. Much less can it be held to constitute education, which consists in educating the faculties and forming the habits; the means varying according to the sphere in which the individuals to be educated are likely to act and become useful. I do not hesitate to declare that whether I consider the nature of the discipline adopted,\* or the plan of poisoning the children of the poor with a sort of potential infidelity under the "liberal idea" of teaching those points only of religious faith in which all denominations agree, I cannot but denounce the so-called Lancastrian schools as pernicious beyond all power of compensation by the new acquirement of reading and writing. But take even Dr. Bell's original and unsophisticated plan, which I myself regard as an especial gift of Providence to the human race; and suppose this incomparable machine, this vast moral steam-engine, to have been adopted and in free motion throughout the empire; it would yet appear to me a most dangerous delusion to rely on it as if this of itself formed an efficient national education. We cannot, I repeat, honour the scheme too highly as a prominent and necessary part of the great process; but it will neither supersede, nor can it be substituted for, sundry other measures that are at least equally important. And these are such measures, too, as unfortunately involve the necessity of sacrifices on the side of the rich and powerful, more costly, and far more difficult, than the yearly subscription of a few pounds!—such measures as demand more self-denial than the expenditure of time in a committee or of eloquence in a public meeting.

Nay, let Dr. Bell's philanthropic end have been realized, and the proposed modicum of learning universal: yet convinced of its insufficiency to stem up against the strong currents set in from an opposite point, I dare not assure myself, that it may not be driven backward by them and become confluent with the evils it was intended to preclude.

What other measures I had in contemplation, it has been my endeavour to explain elsewhere. But I am greatly deceived, if

\* See Mr. Southey's tract on the new or Madras system of education: especially toward to the conclusion, where with exquisite humour as well as with his usual poignancy of wit he has detailed Joseph Lancaster's disciplinarian inventions. But even in the

schools, that used to be called Lancastrian, these are, I believe, discontinued. The true perfection of discipline in a school is—The maximum of watchfulness with the minimum of punishment.

one preliminary to an efficient education of the labouring classes be not the recurrence to a more manly discipline of the intellect on the part of the learned themselves, in short, a thorough recasting of the moulds, in which the minds of our gentry, the characters of our future land-owners, magistrates and senators, are to receive their shape and fashion. O what treasures of practical wisdom would be once more brought into open day by the solution of this problem! Suffice it for the present to hint the master-thought. The first man on whom the light of an idea dawned, did in that same moment receive the spirit and the credentials of a lawgiver: and as long as man shall exist, so long will the possession of that antecedent knowledge (the maker and master of all profitable experience) which exists only in the power of an idea, be the one lawful qualification of all dominion in the world of the senses. Without this, experience itself is but a Cyclops walking backwards, under the fascination of the past: and we are indebted to a lucky coincidence of outward circumstances and contingencies, least of all things to be calculated on in times like the present, if this one-eyed experience does not seduce its worshipper into practical anachronisms.

But alas! the halls of old philosophy have been so long deserted, that we circle them at shy distance as the haunt of phantoms and chimeras. The sacred grove of Academus is held in like regard with the unfoodful trees in the shadowy world of Maro that had a dream attached to every leaf. The very terms of ancient wisdom are worn out, or, far worse, stamped on baser metal: (see App. E.) and whoever should have the hardihood to reproclaim its solemn truths must commence with a glossary.

In reviewing the foregoing pages, I am apprehensive that they may be thought to resemble the overflow of an earnest mind rather than an orderly premeditated composition. Yet this imperfection of form will not be altogether uncompensated, if it should be the means of presenting with greater liveliness the feelings and impressions under which they were written. Still less shall I regret this defect if it should induce some future traveller engaged in the like journey to take the same station and to look through the same medium at the one main object which amid all my discursions I have still held in view. The more, however, doth it behove me not to conclude this address without attempting to recapitulate in as few and as plain words as possible, the sum and substance of its contents.

There is a state of mind indispensable for all perusal of the Scriptures to edification, which must be learnt by experience, and

can be described only by negatives. It is the direct opposite of that which (supposing a moral passage of Scripture to have been cited) would prompt a man to reply, "Who does not know this?" But if the quotation should have been made in support of some article of faith, this same habit of mind will betray itself, in different individuals, by apparent contraries, which yet are but the two poles, or plus and minus states, of the same influence. The latter, or the negative pole, may be suspected as often as you hear a comment on some high and doctrinal text introduced with the words, "It only means so and so!" For instance I object to a professed free-thinking Christian, the following solemn enunciation of "the riches of the glory of the mystery hid from ages and from generations" by the philosophic Apostle of the Gentiles. "Who (viz. the Father) hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born\* of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell: and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." What is the reply? Why, that by these words (very bold and figurative words it must be confessed, yet still) St. Paul *only* meant that the universal and eternal truths of morality and a future state had been re-proclaimed by an inspired teacher and confirmed by miracles! The words only mean, sir, that a state of retribution after this life had been proved by the fact of Christ's Resurrection—that is all! But I shall scarcely obtain an answer to certain difficulties involved in this free and liberal interpretation: ex. gr. that with the exception of a handful of rich men, considered as little better than infidels, the Jews were as fully persuaded of these truths as Christians in general are at the present day. Moreover, that this inspired Teacher had Himself declared, that if the Jews did not

\* A mistaken translation. The words should be: Begotten before all creation; and even this does not convey the *full* sense of

the superlative, *πρωτότοκος*. The present version makes the following words absurd.

believe on the evidence of Moses and the Prophets, neither would they though a man should rise from the dead.

Of the positive pole, on the other hand, language to the following purport is the usual exponent. "It is a mystery; and we are bound to believe the words without presuming to inquire into the meaning of them." That is, we believe in St. Paul's veracity; and that is enough. Yet St. Paul repeatedly presses on his hearers that thoughtful perusal of the sacred writings, and those habits of earnest though humble inquiry, which if the heart only have been previously regenerated would lead them "to a full assurance of understanding *eis epignōsin*, (to an entire assent of the mind; to a spiritual intuition, or positive inward knowledge by experience) of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in which (*nempe, μυστηρίῳ*) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

To expose the inconsistency of both these extremes, and by inference to recommend that state of mind, which looks forward to "the fellowship of the mystery of the faith as a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, the eyes of the understanding being enlightened"—this formed my general purpose. Long has it been at my heart! I consider it as the contradicting principle of Christianity that in it alone *πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως* (the understanding in its utmost power and opulence) culminates in faith, as in its crown of glory, at once its light and its remuneration. On this most important point I attempted long ago to preclude, if possible, all misconception and misinterpretation of my opinions, though in a work which from the mode of its publication and other circumstances must be unknown or known but by name to the great majority of my present readers. Alas! in this time of distress and embarrassment the sentiments have a more especial interest, a more immediate application, than when they were first written. If, I observed, it be a truth attested alike by common feeling and common sense, that the greater part of human misery depends directly on human vices, and the remainder indirectly, by what means can we act on men, so as to remove or preclude their vices and purify their principles of moral election? The question is not by what means each man is to alter his own character—in order to this, all the means prescribed, and all the aidances given by religion, may be necessary for him. Vain of themselves may be

"The sayings of the Wise  
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd

\* \* \* \*

Unless he feel within  
Some source of consolation from above,  
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,  
And fainting spirits uphold."

SAMSON AGONISTES.

This is not the question. Virtue would not be virtue could it be given by one fellow-creature to another. To make use of all the means and appliances in our power to the actual attainment of rectitude, is the abstract of the duty which we owe to ourselves. To supply those means as far as we can, comprises our duty to others. The question then is, what are these means? Can they be any other than the communication of knowledge and the removal of those evils and impediments which prevent its reception? It may not be in our power to combine both, but it is in the power of every man to contribute to the former, who is sufficiently informed to feel that it is his duty. If it be said that we should endeavour not so much to remove ignorance, as to make the ignorant religious, religion herself, through her sacred oracles, answers for me, that all effective faith pre-supposes knowledge and individual conviction. If the mere acquiescence in truth, uncomprehended and unfathomed, were sufficient, few indeed would be the vicious and the miserable; in this country at least, where speculative infidelity is, heaven be praised, confined to a small number. Like bodily deformity, there is one instance here and another there; but three in one place are already an undue proportion. It is highly worthy of observation, that the inspired writings received by Christians are distinguishable from all other books pretending to inspiration, from the scriptures of the Brahmins, and even from the Koran, in their strong and frequent recommendations of truth. I do not here mean veracity, which cannot but be enforced in every code which appeals to the religious principle of man; but knowledge. This is not only extolled as the crown and honour of a man, but to seek after it is again and again commanded us as one of our most sacred duties. Yea, the very perfection and final bliss of the glorified spirit is represented by the apostle as a plain aspect, or intuitive beholding of truth in its eternal and immutable source. Not that knowledge can of itself do all! The light of religion is not that of the moon, light without heat; but neither is its warmth that of the stove, warmth without light. Religion is the sun whose warmth indeed swells and stirs and actuates the life of nature, but who, at the same time, beholds all the growth of life with a master-eye, makes all objects glorious on which he looks, and by that glory visible to others. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our



Lord Jesus Christ, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth all knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fulness of God." For to know God is (by a vital and spiritual act in which to know and to possess are one and indivisible) to acknowledge Him as the Infinite Clearness in the Incomprehensible Fulness, and Fulness Incomprehensible with Infinite Clearness.

This then comprises my first purpose, which is in a twofold sense general. For in the substance, if not in the form, it belongs to all my countrymen and fellow-christians without distinction of class; while for its object it embraces the whole of the inspired Scriptures from the recorded first day of heaven and earth, ere the light was yet gathered into celestial lamps or reflected from their revolving mirrors, to the predicted Sabbath of the new creation, when heaven and earth shall have become one city with neither "sun nor moon to shine in it: for the glory of God shall lighten it and the Lamb be the light thereof." My second purpose is after the same manner in a twofold sense specific: for as this disquisition is nominally addressed to, so was it for the greater part exclusively intended for, the perusal of the learned; and its object likewise is to urge men so qualified to apply their powers and attainments to an especial study of the Old Testament as teaching the elements of political science.

Is it asked in what sense I use these words? I answer, in the same sense as the terms are employed when we refer to Euclid for the elements of the science of geometry, only with one difference arising from the diversity of the subject. With one difference only; but that one how momentous! All other sciences are confined to abstractions, unless when the term science is used in an improper and flattering sense: thus we may speak without boast of natural history; but we have not yet attained to a science of nature. The Bible alone contains a science of realities; and therefore each of its elements is at the same time a living germ, in which the present involves the future, and in the finite the infinite exists potentially. That hidden mystery in every, the minutest form of existence, which contemplated under the relations of time presents itself to the understanding retrospectively, as an infinite ascent of causes, and prospectively as an interminable progression of effects—that which contemplated in space is

beheld intuitively as a law of action and re-action, continuous and extending beyond all bound—this same mystery freed from the phenomena of time and space, and seen in the depth of real being, reveals itself to the pure reason as the actual immanence of all in each. Are we struck with admiration at beholding the cope of heaven imaged in a dew-drop? The least of the animalcula to which that drop would be an ocean contains in itself an infinite problem of which God omnipresent is the only solution. The slave of custom is roused by the rare and the accidental alone; but the axioms of the unthinking are to the philosopher the deepest problems as being the nearest to the mysterious root, and partaking at once of its darkness and its pregnancy.

O what a mine of undiscovered treasures, what a new world of power and truth would the Bible promise to our future meditation, if in some gracious moment one solitary text of all its inspired contents should but dawn upon us in the pure untroubled brightness of an idea, that most glorious birth of the God-like within us, which even as the light, its material symbol, reflects itself from a thousand surfaces, and flies homeward to its parent mind enriched with a thousand forms, itself above form, and still remaining in its own simplicity and identity! O for a flash of that same light, in which the first position of geometric science that ever loosed itself from the generalizations of a groping and insecure experience, did, for the first time, reveal itself to a human intellect, in all its evidence and all its fruitfulness, transparence without vacuum, and plenitude without opacity! O that a single gleam of our own inward experience would make comprehensible to us the rapturous Eureka, and the grateful hecatomb, of the philosopher of Samos! or that vision which, from the contemplation of an arithmetical harmony, rose to the eye of Kepler, presenting the planetary world, and all its orbits in the divine order of their ranks and distances: or which, in the falling of an apple, revealed to the ethereal intuition of our own Newton the constructive principle of the material universe. The promises which I have ventured to hold forth concerning the hidden treasures of the Law and the Prophets will neither be condemned as paradox nor as exaggeration, by the mind that has learnt to understand the possibility, that the reduction of the sands of the sea to number should be found a less stupendous problem by Archimedes than the simple conception of the Parmenidean One. What however is achievable by the human understanding without this light, may be comprised in the epithet, *κενόσπουδοι*: and a melancholy comment on that phrase would the history of human cabinets and

legislators for the last thirty years furnish! The excellent Barrow, the last of the disciples of Plato and Archimedes among our modern mathematicians, shall give the description and state the value: and in his words I shall conclude.

*Aliud agere*, to be impertinently busy, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respects worse than to do nothing. Of such industry we may understand that of the Preacher, "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them."

## APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

### COMMENTS AND ESSAYS.

(A.)

**I**N this use of the word "sufficiency," I presuppose on the part of the reader or hearer, a humble and docile state of mind, and above all the practice of prayer, as the necessary condition of such a state, and the best if not the only means of becoming sincere to our own hearts. Christianity is especially differenced from all other religions by being grounded on facts which all men alike have the means of ascertaining, the same means, with equal facility, and which no man can ascertain for another. Each person must be herein querist and respondent to himself; Am I sick, and therefore need a physician? Am I in spiritual slavery, and therefore need a ransom? Have I given a pledge, which must be redeemed, and which I cannot redeem by my own resources? Am I at one with God, and is my will concentric with that holy power, which is at once the constitutive will and the supreme reason of the universe? If not, must I not be mad if I do not seek, and miserable if I do not discover and embrace, the means of at one-ment? To collect, to weigh, and to appreciate historical proofs and presumptions is *not* equally within the means and opportunities of every man alike. The testimony of books of history is one of the strong and stately pillars of the Church of Christ; but it is not the foundation, nor can it without loss of essential faith be mistaken or substituted for the foundation. There is a sect, which in its scornful pride of antipathy to mysteries (that is to all those doctrines of the pure and intuitive reason, which transcend the understanding, and can never be contemplated by it, but through a false and falsifying perspective), affects to condemn all inward and preliminary experience

as enthusiastic delusion or fanatical contagion. Historic evidence, on the other hand, these men treat, as the Jews of old treated the brazen serpent, which was the relic and evidence of the miracles worked by Moses in the wilderness. They turned it into an idol: and therefore Hezekiah ("who clave to the Lord, and did right in the sight of the Lord, so that after him was none like him, among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him,") not only "removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves;" but likewise "brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for the children of Israel did burn incense to it."

To preclude an error so pernicious, I request that to the wilful neglect of those outward ministrations of the Word which all Englishmen have the privilege of attending, the reader will add the setting at nought likewise of those inward means of grace, without which the language of the Scriptures, in the most faithful translation and in the purest and plainest English, must nevertheless continue to be a dead language: a sun-dial by moonlight.]

## (B.)

Not without great hesitation should I express a suspicion concerning the genuineness of *any*, the least important passage in the New Testament, unless I could adduce the most conclusive evidence from the earliest manuscripts and commentators, in support of its interpolation: well knowing that such permission has already opened a door to the most fearful licence. It is indeed, in its consequences, no less than an assumed right of picking and choosing our religion out of the Scriptures. Most assuredly I would never hazard a suggestion of this kind in any instance in which the retention or the omission of the words could make the slightest difference with regard to fact, miracle, or precept. Still less would I start the question, where the hypothesis of their interpolation could be wrested to the discountenancing of any article of doctrine concerning which dissension existed: no, not though the doubt or disbelief of the doctrine had been confined to those, whose faith few but themselves would honour with the name of Christianity; however reluctant we might be, both from the courtesies of social life and the nobler charities of humility, to withhold from the persons themselves the title of Christians.

But as there is nothing in v. 40 of Matthew, c. xii. which would fall within this general rule, I dare permit myself to propose the query, whether there does not exist internal evidence of its

being a gloss of some unlearned, though pious, Christian of the first century, which had slipped into the text? The following are my reasons:—1. It is at all events a comment on the words of our Saviour, and no part of His speech. 2. It interrupts the course and breaks down the jut and application of our Lord's argument, as addressed to men who from their unwillingness to sacrifice their vain traditions, gainful hypocrisy, and pride both of heart and of demeanour, demanded a miracle for the confirmation of moral truths that must have borne witness to their own divinity in the consciences of all who had not rendered themselves conscience-proof. 3. The text strictly taken is irreconcilable with the fact as it is afterwards related, and as it is universally accepted. I at least remember no calculation of time, according to which the interspace from Friday evening to the earliest dawn of Sunday morning, could be represented as three days and three nights. As three days our Saviour Himself speaks of it (John ii. 19), and so it would be described in common language as well as according to the use of the Jews; but I can find no other part of Scripture which authorizes the phrase of three nights. This gloss is not found either in the repetition of the circumstance by Matthew himself (xvi. 4), nor in Mark (viii. 12), nor in Luke (xii. 54). Mark's narration doth indeed most strikingly confirm my second reason, drawn from the purpose of our Saviour's argument: for the allusion to the prophet Jonas is omitted altogether, and the refusal therefore rests on the depravity of the applicants, as proved by the wantonness of the application itself. All signs must have been useless to such men as long as the great sign of the times, the call to repentance, remained without effect. 4. The gloss corresponds with the known fondness of the earlier Jewish converts, and indeed of the Christians in general, of the second century, to bring out in detail and into exact square every accommodation of the Old Testament, which they either found in the gospels, or made for themselves. It is too notorious into what strange fancies (not always at safe distance from dangerous errors) the oldest uninspired writers of the Christian church were seduced by this passion of transmuting without Scriptural authority incidents, names, and even mere sounds of the Hebrew Scriptures, into evangelical types and correspondencies.

An additional reason may perhaps occur to those who alone would be qualified to appreciate its force; viz. to biblical scholars familiar with the opinions and arguments of sundry doctors, Rabbinical as well as Christian, respecting the first and second chapter of Jonah.

(C.)

Reason and religion differ only as a twofold application of the same power. But if we are obliged to distinguish, we must ideally separate. In this sense I affirm, that reason is the knowledge of the laws of the whole considered as one: and as such it is contradistinguished from the understanding, which concerns itself exclusively with the quantities, qualities, and relations of particulars in time and space. The understanding, therefore, is the science of phenomena, and their subsumption under distinct kinds and sorts (genus and species). Its functions supply the rules and constitute the possibility of experience; but remain mere logical forms, except as far as materials are given by the senses or sensations. The reason, on the other hand, is the science of the universal, having the ideas of oneness and allness as its two elements or primary factors. In the language of the old schools,

Unity       +       Omnëity

=

Totality.

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The reason first manifests itself in man by the tendency to the comprehension of all as one. We can neither rest in an infinite that is not at the same time a whole, nor in a whole that is not infinite. Hence the natural Man is always in a state either of resistance or of captivity to the understanding and the fancy, which cannot represent totality without limit: and he either loses the one in the striving after the infinite, (*i.e.*, atheism with or without polytheism), or the infinite in the striving after the one (*i.e.*, anthropomorphic monotheism).

The rational instinct, therefore, taken abstractedly and unbalanced, did in itself ("Ye shall be as gods!" Gen. iii. 5), and in its consequences (the lusts of the flesh, the eye, and the understanding, as in verse the sixth), form the original temptation, through which man fell: and in all ages has continued to originate the same, even from Adam, in whom we all fell, to the atheist who deified the human reason in the person of a harlot during the earlier period of the French Revolution.

To this tendency, therefore, religion, as the consideration of the particular and individual (in which respect it takes up and identifies with itself the excellence of the understanding) but.

of the individual, as it exists and has its being in the universal (in which respect it is one with the pure *reason*),—to this tendency, I say, religion assigns the due limits, and is the echo of the “voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.” Hence in all the ages and countries of civilization Religion has been the parent and fosterer of the Fine Arts, as of Poetry, Music, Painting, &c., the common essence of which consists in a similar union of the Universal and the Individual. In this union, moreover, is contained the true sense of the ideal. Under the old law the altar, the curtains, the priestly vestments, and whatever else was to represent the beauty of holiness, had an ideal character: and the Temple itself was a masterpiece of ideal beauty.

There exists in the human being, at least in man fully developed, no mean symbol of Tri-unity, in reason, religion, and the will. For each of the three, though a distinct agency, implies and demands the other two, and loses its own nature at the moment that from distinction it passes into division or separation. The perfect frame of a man is the perfect frame of a state: and in the light of this idea we must read Plato’s “Republic.” For, if I judge rightly, this celebrated work is to “The History of the Town of Man-soul,” what Plato was to John Bunyan.

The comprehension, impartiality, and far-sightedness of reason (the legislative of our nature), taken singly and exclusively, becomes mere visionariness in intellect, and indolence or hard-heartedness in morals. It is the science of cosmopolitism without country, of philanthropy without neighbourliness or consanguinity, in short, of all the impostures of that philosophy of the French Revolution, which would sacrifice each to the shadowy idol of all. For Jacobinism is *monstrum hybridum*, made up in part of despotism, and in part of abstract reason misapplied to objects that belong entirely to experience and the understanding. Its instincts and mode of action are in strict correspondence with its origin. In all places, Jacobinism betrays its mixed parentage and nature, by applying to the brute passions and physical force of the multitude (that is, to man as a mere animal), in order to build up government and the frame of society on natural rights instead of social privileges, on the universals of abstract reason instead of positive institutions, the rights of specific experience, and the modifications of existing circumstances. Right in its most proper sense is the creature of law and statute, and only in the technical language of the courts has it any substantial and independent sense. In morals, right is a word without meaning except as the correlative of duty.

From all this it follows, that reason as the science of all as the



whole, must be interpenetrated by a power, that represents the concentration of all in each—a power that acts by contraction of universal truths into individual duties, as the only form in which those truths can attain life and reality. Now this is religion, which is the executive of our nature, and on this account the name of highest dignity, and the symbol of sovereignty.

Yet this again—yet even religion itself, if ever in its too exclusive devotion to the specific and individual it neglects to interpose the contemplation of the universal, changes its being into superstition, and becoming more and more earthly and servile, as more and more estranged from the one in all, goes wandering at length with its pack of amulets, bead-rolls, periapts, fetiches, and the like pedlary, on pilgrimages to Loretto, Mecca, or the temple of Jaggernaut, arm-in-arm with sensuality on one side and self-torture on the other, followed by a motley group of friars, pardoners, faquirs, gamesters, flagellants, mountebanks, and harlots.

But neither can reason nor religion exist or co-exist as reason and religion, except as far as they are actuated by the Will (the platonic *θυμὸς*), which is the sustaining, coercive and ministerial power, the functions of which in the individual correspond to the officers of war and police in the ideal Republic of Plato. In its state of immanence (or indwelling) in reason and religion, the Will appears indifferently, as wisdom or as love: two names of the same power, the former more intelligential, the latter more spiritual, the former more frequent in the Old, the latter in the New Testament. But in its utmost abstraction and consequent state of reprobation, the Will becomes satanic pride and rebellious self-idolatry in the relations of the spirit to itself, and remorseless despotism relatively to others; the more hopeless as the more obdurate by its subjugation of sensual impulses, by its superiority to toil and pain and pleasure; in short, by the fearful resolve to find in itself alone the one absolute motive of action, under which all other motives from within and from without must be either subordinated or crushed.

This is the character which Milton has so philosophically as well as sublimely embodied in the Satan of his *Paradise Lost*. Alas! too often has it been embodied in real life! Too often has it given a dark and savage grandeur to the historic page! And wherever it has appeared, under whatever circumstances of time and country, the same ingredients have gone to its composition; and it has been identified by the same attributes. Hope in which there is no cheerfulness; steadfastness within and immovable resolve, with outward restlessness and whirling activity; violence

with guile; temerity with cunning; and, as the result of all, interminableness of object with perfect indifference of means; these are the qualities that have constituted the commanding genius! these are the marks that have characterised the masters of mischief, the liberticides and mighty hunters of mankind, from Nimrod to Napoleon. And from inattention to the possibility of such a character as well as from ignorance of its elements, even men of honest intentions too frequently become fascinated. Nay, whole nations have been so far duped by this want of insight and reflection as to regard with palliative admiration, instead of wonder and abhorrence, the Molochs of human nature, who are indebted for the far larger portion of their meteoric success to their total want of principle, and who surpass the generality of their fellow-creatures in one act of courage only, that of daring to say with their whole heart, "Evil, be thou my good!" All system so far is power; and a systematic criminal, self-consistent and entire in wickedness, who entrenches villany within villany, and barricadoes crime by crime, has removed a world of obstacles by the mere decision, that he will have no obstacles but those of force and brute matter.

I have only to add a few sentences in completion of this note, on the conscience and on the understanding. The conscience is neither reason, religion, nor will, but an experience (*sui generis*) of the coincidence of the human will with reason and religion. It might, perhaps, be called a spiritual sensation; but that there lurks a contradiction in the terms, and that it is often deceptive to give a common or generic name to that, which being unique, can have no fair analogy. Strictly speaking, therefore, the conscience is neither a sensation nor a sense; but a testifying state, best described in the words of our liturgy, as the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Of this latter faculty considered in and of itself the peripatetic aphorism, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, is strictly true, as well as the legal maxim, *de rebus non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*. The eye is not more inappropriate to sound, than the mere understanding to the modes and laws of spiritual existence. In this sense I have used the term; and in this sense I assert that "the understanding or experiential faculty, unirradiated by the reason and the spirit, has no appropriate object but the material world in relation to our worldly interests. The far-sighted prudence of man, and the more narrow but at the same time far less fallible cunning of the fox, are both no other than a nobler substitute for salt, in order that the hog may not putrefy before its destined hour!" (*The Friend*.)

It must not, however, be overlooked, that this insulation of the understanding is our own act and deed. The man of healthful and undivided intellect uses his understanding in this state of abstraction only as a tool or organ: even as the arithmetician uses numbers, that is, as the means not the end of knowledge. Our Shakespeare in agreement both with truth and the philosophy of his age, names it "discourse of reason," as an instrumental faculty belonging to reason: and Milton opposes the discursive to the intuitive, as the lower to the higher,

"Differing but in degree, in *kind* the same!"

Of the discursive understanding, which forms for itself general notions and terms of classification for the purpose of comparing and arranging phenomena, the characteristic is clearness without depth. It contemplates the unity of things in their limits only, and is consequently a knowledge of superficies without substance. So much so indeed, that it entangles itself in contradictions, in the very effort of comprehending the idea of substance. The completing power which unites clearness with depth, the plenitude of the sense with the comprehensibility of the understanding, is the imagination, impregnated with which the understanding itself becomes intuitive, and a living power. The reason (not the abstract reason, not the reason as the mere organ of science, or as the faculty of scientific principles and schemes a priori; but reason), as the integral spirit of the regenerated man, reason substantiated and vital, "one only, yet manifold, overseeing all, and going through all understanding; the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence from the glory of the Almighty; which remaining in itself regenerateth all other powers, and in all ages entering into holy souls maketh them friends of God and prophets" (Wisdom of Solomon, c. vii.); this reason without being either the sense, the understanding, or the imagination, contains all three within itself, even as the mind contains its thoughts and is present in and through them all; or as the expression pervades the different features of an intelligent countenance. Each individual must bear witness of it to his own mind, even as he describes life and light: and with the silence of light it describes itself and dwells in us only as far as we dwell in it. It cannot in strict language be called a faculty, much less a personal property, of any human mind! He, with whom it is present, can as little appropriate it, whether totally or by partition, as he can claim ownership in the breathing air, or make an inclosure in the cope of heaven.

The object of the preceding discourse was to recommend the Bible, as the end and centre of our reading and meditation. I can truly affirm of myself, that my studies have been profitable and availing to me only so far, as I have endeavoured to use all my other knowledge as a glass enabling me to receive more light in a wider field of vision from the Word of God. If you have accompanied me thus far, thoughtful reader, let me not weary you if I digress for a few moments to another book, likewise a revelation of God—the great book of His servant Nature. That in its obvious sense and literal interpretation, it declares the being and attributes of the Almighty Father, none but the *fool in heart* has ever dared gainsay. But it has been the music of gentle and pious minds in all ages, it is the poetry of all human nature, to read it likewise in a figurative sense, and to find therein correspondences and symbols of the spiritual world.

I have at this moment before me, in the flowery meadow, on which my eye is now reposing, one of its most soothing chapters, in which there is no lamenting word, no one character of guilt or anguish. For never can I look and meditate on the vegetable creation, without a feeling similar to that with which we gaze at a beautiful infant that has fed itself asleep at its mother's bosom, and smiles in its strange dream of obscure yet happy sensations. The same tender and genial pleasure takes possession of me, and this pleasure is checked and drawn inward by the like aching melancholy, by the same whispered remonstrance, and made restless by a similar impulse of aspiration. It seems as if the soul said to herself: From this state hast thou fallen! Such shouldst thou still become, thy Self all permeable to a holier power! thy self at once hidden and glorified by its own transparency, as the accidental and dividuous in this quiet and harmonious object is subjected to the life and light of nature which shines in it, even as the transmitted power, love and wisdom, of God over all, fills and shines through nature! But what the plant is, by an act not its own and unconsciously—that must thou make thyself to become! must by prayer and by a watchful and unresisting spirit, join at least with the preventive and assisting grace to make thyself, in that light of conscience which inflameth not, and with that knowledge which puffeth not up!

But further, and with particular reference to that undivided reason, neither merely speculative nor merely practical, but both in one, which I have in this annotation endeavoured to contradistinguish from the understanding, I seem to myself to behold in the quiet objects on which I am gazing, more than an arbitrary

illustration, more than a mere simile, the work of my own fancy. I feel an awe, as if there were before my eyes the same power as that of the reason—the same power in a lower dignity, and therefore a symbol established in the truth of things. I feel it alike, whether I contemplate a single tree or flower, or meditate on vegetation throughout the world, as one of the great organs of the life of nature. Lo!—with the rising sun it commences its outward life and enters into open communion with all the elements, at once assimilating them to itself and to each other. At the same moment it strikes its roots and unfolds its leaves, absorbs and respire, steams forth its cooling vapour and finer fragrance, and breathes a repairing spirit, at once the food and tone of the atmosphere, into the atmosphere that feeds it. Lo!—at the touch of light how it returns an air akin to light, and yet with the same pulse effectuates its own secret growth, still contracting to fix what expanding it had refined. Lo!—how upholding the ceaseless plastic motion of the parts in the profoundest rest of the whole it becomes the visible *organismus* of the whole silent or elementary life of nature, and therefore, in incorporating the one extreme becomes the symbol of the other; the natural symbol of that higher life of reason, in which the whole series (known to us in our present state of being) is perfected, in which, therefore, all the subordinate gradations recur, and are re-ordained “in more abundant honour.” We had seen each in its own cast, and we now recognise them all as co-existing in the unity of a higher form, the crown and completion of the earthly, and the mediator of a new and heavenly series. Thus finally, the vegetable creation, in the simplicity and uniformity of its internal structure symbolizing the unity of nature, while it represents the omniformity of her delegated functions in its external variety and manifoldness, becomes the record and chronicle of her ministerial acts, and inches the vast unfolded volume of the earth with the hieroglyphics of her history.

O! if as the plant to the orient beam, we would but open out our minds to that holier light, which “being compared with light is found before it, more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars” (Wisdom of Solomon, vii. 29), ungenial, alien, and adverse to our very nature would appear the boastful wisdom which, beginning in France, gradually tampered with the taste and literature of all the most-civilized nations of Christendom, seducing the understanding from its natural allegiance, and therewith from all its own lawful claims, titles, and privileges. It was placed as a ward of honour in the courts of faith and reason;

but it chose to dwell alone, and became a harlot by the wayside. The commercial spirit, and the ascendancy of the experimental philosophy which took place at the close of the seventeenth century, though both good and beneficial in their own kinds, combined to foster its corruption. Flattered and dazzled by the real or supposed discoveries which it had made, the more the understanding was enriched, the more did it become debased; till science itself put on a selfish and sensual character, and immediate utility, in exclusive reference to the gratification of the wants and appetites of the animal, the vanities and caprices of the social, and the ambition of the political, man was imposed as the test of all intellectual powers and pursuits. Worth was degraded into a lazy synonym of value; and value was exclusively attached to the interest of the senses. But though the growing alienation and self-sufficiency of the understanding was perceptible at an earlier period, yet it seems to have been about the middle of the last century, under the influence of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, say generally of the so-called encyclopædists, and alas! of their crowned proselytes and disciples, Frederick, Joseph, and Catharine, that the human understanding, and this too in its narrowest form, was tempted to throw off all show of reverence to the spiritual and even to the moral powers and impulses of the soul; and, usurping the name of reason, openly joined the banners of Antichrist, at once the pander and the prostitute of sensuality; and whether in the cabinet, laboratory, the dissecting-room, or the brothel, alike busy in the schemes of vice and irreligion. Well and truly might it, thus personified in our fancy, have been addressed in the words of the evangelical prophet, which I have once before quoted: "Thou hast said, none is my overseer!—thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee!—and thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and there is none beside me!" (Isaiah xlvii. 10.)

Prurient, bustling, and revolutionary, this French wisdom has never more than grazed the surfaces of knowledge. As political economy, in its zeal for the increase of food, it habitually overlooked the qualities and even the sensations of those that were to feed on it. As ethical philosophy, it recognised no duties which it could not reduce into debtor and creditor accounts on the ledgers of self-love, where no coin was sterling which could not be rendered into agreeable sensations. And even in its height of self-complacency as chemical art, greatly am I deceived if it has not from the very beginning mistaken the products of destruction, *cadavera rerum*, for the elements of composition: and most as

surely it has dearly purchased a few brilliant inventions at the loss of all communion with life and the spirit of nature. As the process, such the result!—a heartless frivolity alternating with a sentimentality as heartless—an ignorant contempt of antiquity—a neglect of moral self-discipline—a deadening of the religious sense, even in the less reflecting forms of natural piety—a scornful reprobation of all consolations and secret refreshings from above—and as the *caput mortuum* of human nature evaporated, a French nature of rapacity, levity, ferocity, and presumption.

Man of understanding, canst thou command the stone to lie, canst thou bid the flower bloom, where thou hast placed it in thy classification? Canst thou persuade the living or the inanimate to stand separate even as thou hast separated them? And do not far rather all things spread out before thee in glad confusion and heedless intermixture, even as a lightsome chaos on which the Spirit of God is moving? Do not all press and swell under one attraction, and live together in promiscuous harmony, each joyous in its own kind, and in the immediate neighbourhood of myriad others that in the system of thy understanding are distant as the poles? If to mint and to remember names delight thee, still arrange and classify and pore and pull to pieces, and peep into death to look for life, as monkeys put their hands behind a looking-glass! Yet consider, in the first sabbath which thou imposest on the busy discursion of thought, that all this is at best little more than a technical memory: that like can only be known by like: that as truth is the correlative of being, so is the act of being the great organ of truth: that in natural no less than in moral science, *quantum sumus, scimus*.

That which we find in ourselves is (*gradu mutato*) the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the "I am," all modes of existence in the external world would flit before us as coloured shadows, with no greater depth, root, or fixture, than the image of a rock hath in a gliding stream, or the rainbow on a fast-sailing rain-storm. The human mind is the compass, in which the laws and actuations of all outward essences are revealed as the dips and declinations. (The application of geometry to the forces and movements of the material world is both proof and instance.) The fact, therefore, that the mind of man, in its own primary and constituent forms, represents the laws of nature, is a mystery which of itself should suffice to make us religious: for it is a problem of which God is the only solution—God, the One before all, and of all, and through all! "True natural philosophy is comprised in the study of the science and

language of symbols. The power delegated to nature is all in every part: and by a symbol I mean, not a metaphor or allegory or any other figure of speech or form of fancy, but an actual and essential part of that, the whole of which it represents. Thus our Lord speaks symbolically when He says that "the eye is the light of the body." The genuine naturalist is a dramatic poet in his own line: and such as our myriad-minded Shakespeare is, compared with the Racines and Metastasios, such and by a similar process of self-transformation would the man be, compared with the doctors of the mechanic school, who should construct his physiology on the heaven-descended, Know thyself.

Even "the visions of the night" speak to us of powers within us that are not dreamt of in their day-dream of philosophy. The dreams which we most often remember are produced by the nascent sensations and inward *motiunculae* (the fluxions) of the waking state. Hence, too, they are more capable of being remembered, because, passing more gradually into our waking thoughts, they are more likely to associate with our first perceptions after sleep. Accordingly, when the nervous system is approaching to the waking state, a sort of under-consciousness blends with our dreams, that in all we imagine as seen or heard, our own self is the ventriloquist, and moves the slides in the magic-lantern. We dream about things!

But there are few persons of tender feelings and reflecting habits who have not, more or less often in the course of their lives, experienced dreams of a very different kind, and during the profoundest sleep that is compatible with after-recollection—states of which it would be scarcely too bold to say that we dream the things themselves; so exact, minute, and vivid beyond all power of ordinary memory is the portraiture, so marvellously perfect is our brief metempsychosis into the very being, as it were, of the person who seems to address us. If I may be allowed to quote from myself (*The Friend*), "the dullest wight is at times a Shakespeare in his dreams." Not only may we expect that men of strong religious feelings, but little religious knowledge, will occasionally be tempted to regard such occurrences as supernatural visitations; but it ought not to surprise us if such dreams should sometimes be confirmed by the event, as though they had actually possessed a character of divination. For who shall decide how far a perfect reminiscence of past experiences (of many perhaps that had escaped our reflex consciousness at the time)—who shall determine to what extent this reproductive imagination, unsophisticated by the will, and undistracted by intrusions from



the senses, may or may not be concentrated and sublimed into foresight and presentiment? There would be nothing herein either to foster superstition, on the one hand, or to justify contemptuous disbelief, on the other. Incredulity is but credulity seen from behind, bowing and nodding assent to the habitual and the fashionable.

To the touch (or feeling) belongs the proximate; to the eye, the distant. Now, little as I might be disposed to believe, I should be still less inclined to ridicule, the conjecture that in the recesses of our nature, and undeveloped, there might exist an inner sense (and therefore appertaining wholly to time)—a sense hitherto “without a name,” which as a higher third combined and potentially included both the former. Thus gravitation combines and includes the powers of attraction and repulsion, which are the constituents of matter, as distinguished from body. And thus, not as a compound, but as a higher third, it realizes matter (of itself *ens fluxionale et præfluum*) and constitutes it body. Now, suppose that this nameless inner sense stood to the relations of time as the power of gravitation to those of space? *A priori*, a presence to the future is not more mysterious or transcendent than a presence to the distant: than a power equally immediate to the most remote objects, as it is to the central mass of its own body, toward which it seems, as it were, enchanting them: for instance, the gravity in the sun and moon to the spring tides of our ocean. The true reply to such an hypothesis would be, that as there is nothing to be said against its possibility, there is likewise nothing to be urged for its reality; and that the facts may be rationally explained without it.

It has been asked why, knowing myself to be the object of personal slander (slander as unprovoked as it is groundless, unless acts of kindness are provocation), I furnish this material for it, by pleading in palliation of so chimerical a fancy. With that half-playful sadness, which at once sighs and smiles, I answered: Why not for that very reason?—viz., in order that my calumniator might have, if not a material, yet some basis for the poison-gas of his invention to combine with? But no; pure falsehood is often for the time the most effective; for how can a man confute what he can only contradict? Our opinions and principles cannot prove an *alibi*. Think only what your feelings would be if you heard a wretch deliberately perjure himself in support of an infamous accusation, so remote from all fact, so smooth and homogeneous in its untruth, such a round robin of mere lies, that you knew not which to begin with? What could you do but look round with horror and astonishment, pleading silently to human

nature itself, and perhaps (as hath really been the case with me) forget both the slanderer and the slander in the anguish inflicted by the passiveness of your many professed friends, whose characters you had ever been as eager to clear from the least stain of reproach as if a coal of fire had been on your own skin? But enough of this, which would not have occurred to me at all at this time, had it not been thus suggested.

The feeling that, in point of fact, chiefly influenced me in the preceding half apology for the supposition of a divining power in the human mind, arose out of the conviction that an age or nation may become free from certain prejudices, beliefs, and superstitious practices, in two ways. It may have really risen above them; or it may have fallen below them, and become too bad for their continuance. "The rustic would have little reason to thank the philosopher who should give him true conceptions of ghosts, omens, dreams, and presentiments, at the price of abandoning his faith in Providence, and in the continued existence of his fellow-creatures after their death." The teeth of the old serpent sowed by the Cadmuses of French literature under Louis XV. produced a plenteous crop of such philosophers and truth-trumpeters in the reign of his ill-fated successor. They taught many facts, historical, political, physiological, and ecclesiastical, diffusing their notions so widely that the very ladies and hair-dressers of Paris became fluent encyclopædists; and the sole price which their scholars paid for these treasures of new light, was to believe Christianity an imposture, the Scriptures a forgery, the worship of God superstition, hell a fable, heaven a dream, our life without Providence, and our death without hope. What can be conceived more natural than the result: that self-acknowledged beasts should first act, and next suffer themselves to be treated, as beasts?" (*The Friend*.)

Thank heaven!—notwithstanding the attempts of Thomas Payne and his compeers, it is not so bad with us. Open infidelity has ceased to be a means even of gratifying vanity: for the leaders of the gang themselves turned apostates to Satan, as soon as the number of their proselytes became so large, that atheism ceased to give distinction. Nay, it became a mark of original thinking to defend the Belief and the Ten Commandments: so the strong minds veered round, and religion came again into fashion. But still I exceedingly doubt, whether the superannuation of sundry superstitious fancies be the result of any real diffusion of sound thinking in the nation at large. For instance, there is now no call for a Picus Mirandula to write seven books

against astrology. It might seem, indeed, that a single fact like that of the loss of Kempenfeldt and his crew, or the explosion of the L'Orient, would prove to the common sense of the most ignorant, that even if astrology could be true, the astrologers must be false: for if such a science were possible it could be a science only for gods. Yet Erasmus, the prince of sound common sense, is known to have disapproved of his friend's hardihood, and did not himself venture beyond scepticism: and the immortal Newton, to whom more than to any other human being, Europe owes the purification of its general notions concerning the heavenly bodies, studied astrology with much earnestness, and did not reject it till he had demonstrated the falsehood of all its pretended grounds and principles. The exit of two or three superstitions is no more a proof of the entry of good sense, than the strangling of a despot at Algiers or Constantinople is a symptom of freedom. If therefore not the mere disbelief, but the grounds of such disbelief, must decide the question of our superior illumination, I confess that I could not from my own observations on the books and conversation of the age vote for the affirmative without much hesitation. As many errors are despised by men from ignorance as from knowledge. Whether that be not the case with regard to divination, is a query that rises in my mind (notwithstanding my fullest conviction of the non-existence of such a power) as often as I read the names of the great statesmen and philosophers, which Cicero enumerates in the introductory paragraphs of his work *De Divinatione*.—*Socrates, omnesque Socratici, plurimisque locis gravis Auctor Democritus, Oratippusque, familiaris noster, quem ego parem summis Peripateticis judico, &c. &c.—præsensioem rerum futurarum comprobârunt.* Of all the theistic philosophers, Xenophanes was the only one who wholly rejected it. "*A Stoicis degenerat Panætius, nec tamen ausus est negare, vim esse divinandi, sed dubitare se dixit.*" Nor was this a mere outward assent to the opinions of the state. Many of them subjected the question to the most exquisite arguments, and supported the affirmative not merely by experience, but (especially the Stoics, who of all sects most cultivated psychology) by a minute analysis of human nature and its faculties: while on the mind of Cicero himself (as on that of Plato with regard to a state of retribution after death) the universality of the faith in all times and countries appears to have made the deepest impression. '*Gentem quidem nullam video, neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et a quibusdam intelligi prædicique posse censeat.*'

I fear that the decrease in our feelings of reverence towards mankind at large, and our increasing aversion to every opinion not grounded in some appeal to the senses, have a larger share in this our emancipation from the prejudices of Socrates and Cicero, than reflection, insight, or a fair collation of the facts and arguments. For myself, I would far rather see the English people at large believe somewhat too much than merely just enough, if the latter is to be produced, or must be accompanied, by a contempt or neglect of the faith and intellect of their forefathers. For not to say what yet is most certain, that a people cannot believe just enough, and that there are errors which no wise man will treat with rudeness, while there is a probability that they may be the refraction of some great truth as yet below the horizon; it remains most worthy of our serious consideration, whether a fancied superiority to their ancestors' intellects must not be speedily followed in the popular mind by disrespect for their ancestors' institutions. Assuredly it is not easy to place any confidence in a form of church or state, of whose founders we have been taught to believe, that their philosophy was jargon, and their feelings and notions rank superstition. Yet are we never to grow wiser? Are we to be credulous by birthright, and take ghosts, omens, visions, and witchcraft, as an heirloom? God forbid! A distinction must be made, and such a one as shall be equally availing and profitable to men of all ranks. Is this practicable? Yes! it exists. It is found in the study of the Old and New Testament, if only it be combined with a spiritual partaking of the Redeemer's Blood, of which, mysterious as the symbol may be, the sacramental wine is no mere or arbitrary memento. This is the only certain, and this is the universal preventive of all debasing superstitions; this is the true Hæmony (*αἷμα*, blood: *οἶνος*, wine) which our Milton has beautifully allegorized in a passage strangely overlooked by all his commentators. Bear in mind, reader, the character of a militant Christian, and the results (in this life and in the next) of the Redemption by the Blood of Christ, and so peruse the passage!

Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,  
But of divine effect, he culled me out:  
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,  
But in another country, as he said,  
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil  
Unknown and like esteem'd and the dull swain  
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;  
And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly  
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gavé.  
He called it Hæmony and gave it me,

And bade me keep it as of sovran use  
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,  
 Or ghastly furies' apparition."

MILTON'S *Comus*.

These lines might be employed as an amulet against delusions: for the man, who is indeed a Christian, will as little think of informing himself concerning the future by dreams or presentiments, as of looking for a distant object at broad noon-day with a lighted taper in his hand.

But whatever of good and intellectual nature worketh in us, it is our appointed task to render gradually our own work. For all things that surround us, and all things that happen unto us, have (each doubtless its own providential purpose, but) all one common final cause; namely, the increase of consciousness, in such wise, that whatever part of the *terra incognita* of our nature the increased consciousness discovers, our will may conquer and bring into subjection to itself under the sovereignty of reason.

The leading differences between mechanic and vital philosophy may all be drawn from one point; namely, that the former demanding for every mode and act of existence real or possible visibility, knows only of distance and nearness, composition (or rather juxta-position) and decomposition, in short, the relations of unproductive particles to each other; so that in every instance the result is the exact sum of the component quantities, as in arithmetical addition. This is the philosophy of death, and only of a dead nature can it hold good. In life, much more in spirit, and in a living and spiritual philosophy, the two component counter-powers actually interpenetrate each other, and generate a higher third, including both the former, *ita tamen ut sit alia et major*.

To apply this to the subject of this present essay. The elements (the factors, as it were) of religion are reason and understanding. If the composition stopped in itself, an understanding thus rationalized would lead to the admission of the general doctrines of natural religion, the belief of a God, and of immortality; and probably to an acquiescence in the history and ethics of the Gospel. But still it would be a speculative faith, and in the nature of a theory; as if the main object of religion were to solve difficulties for the satisfaction of the intellect. Now this state of mind, which alas! is the state of too many among our self-entitled rational religionists, is a mere balance or compromise of the two powers, not that living and generative interpenetration of both which would give being to essential religion—to the religion, at the birth of which "we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father; the spirit itself bearing witness

with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 15, 16). In religion there is no abstraction. To the unity and infinity of the Divine Nature, of which it is the partaker, it adds the fulness, and to the fulness the grace and the creative overflowing. That which intuitively it at once beholds and adores, praying always, and rejoicing always—that doth it tend to become. In all things and in each thing—for the Almighty goodness does not create generalities or abide in abstractions—in each, the meanest, object it bears witness to a mystery of infinite solution. Thus "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, it is changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18). For as it is born and not made, so must it grow. As it is the image or symbol of its great object, by the organ of this similitude, as by an eye, it seeth that same image throughout the creation; and from the same cause sympathiseth with all creation in its groans to be redeemed. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in earnest expectation" (Rom. viii. 20—23) of a renewal of its forfeited power, the power, namely, of retiring into that image, which is its substantial form and true life, from the vanity of self, which then only is when for itself it has ceased to be. Even so doth religion finitely express the unity of the Infinite Spirit by being a total act of the soul. And even so doth it represent His fulness by its depth, by its substantiality, and by an all-pervading vital warmth which—relaxing the rigid, consolidating the dissolute, and giving cohesion to that which is about to sink down and fall abroad, as into the dust and crumble of the grave—is a life within life, evermore organizing the soul anew.

Nor doth it express the fulness only of the Spirit. It likewise represents His overflowing by its communicativeness, budding and blossoming forth in all earnestness of persuasion, and in all words of sound doctrine: while, like the citron in a genial soil and climate, it bears a golden fruitage of good works at the same time, the example waxing in contact with the exhortation, as the ripe orange beside the opening orange flower. Yea, even His creativeness doth it shadow out by its own powers of impregnation and production, "being such a one as Paul the aged, and also a prisoner for Jesus Christ, who begat to a lively hope his son Onesimus in his bonds," regenerating in and through the Spirit the slaves of corruption, and fugitives from a far greater master than Philemon. The love of God, and therefore God himself, who is love, religion strives to express by love, and measures its growth by the increase and activity of its love. For

Christian love is the last and divinest birth, the harmony, unity, and god-like transfiguration of all the vital, intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers. Now it manifests itself as the sparkling and ebullient spring of well-doing in gifts and in labours; and now as a silent fountain of patience and long-suffering, the fullness of which no hatred or persecution can exhaust or diminish; a more than conqueror in the persuasion, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate it from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

From God's love through His Son, crucified for us from the beginning of the world, religion begins: and in love towards God and the creatures of God it hath its end and completion. O how heaven-like it is to sit among brethren at the feet of a minister who speaks under the influence of love, and is heard under the same influence! for all abiding and spiritual knowledge, infused into a grateful and affectionate fellow-Christian, is as the child of the mind that infuses it. The delight which he gives he receives; and in that bright and liberal hour the gladdened preacher can scarce gather the ripe produce of to-day without discovering and looking forward to the green fruits and embryos, the heritage and reversionary wealth of the days to come; till he bursts forth in prayer and thanksgiving—"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers few. O gracious Lord of the Harvest, send forth labourers into Thy harvest! There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Thou, Lord over all, art rich to all that call upon Thee. But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? And O! how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and publisheth peace, that bringeth glad tidings of good things, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto the captive soul, Thy God reigneth! God manifested in the flesh hath redeemed thee! O Lord of the Harvest, send forth labourers into Thy harvest!"

Join with me, reader, in the fervent prayer, that we may seek within us, what we can never find elsewhere; that we may find within us what no words can put there; that one only true religion, which elevateth knowing into being, which is at once the science of being, and the being and the life of all genuine science.

## (D.)

In all ages of the Christian church, and in the later period of the Jewish (that is, as soon as from their acquaintance first with the Oriental and afterwards with the Greek philosophy, the precursory and preparative influences of the gospel began to work), there have existed individuals—Laodiceans in spirit, Minims in faith, and Nominalists in philosophy—who mistake outlines for substance, and distinct images for clear conceptions; with whom therefore not to be a thing, is the same as not to be at all. The contempt in which such persons hold the works and doctrines of all theologians before Grotius, and of all philosophers before Locke and Hartley (at least before Bacon and Hobbes), is not accidental, nor yet altogether owing to that epidemic of a proud ignorance occasioned by a diffused sciolism, which gave a sickly and hectic showiness to the latter half of the last century. It is a real instinct of self-defence acting offensively by anticipation. For the authority of all the greatest names of antiquity is full and decisive against them; and man, by the very nature of his birth and growth, is so much the creature of authority, that there was no way of effectually resisting it but by undermining the reverence for the past *in toto*. Thus the Jewish prophets have, forsooth, a certain degree of antiquarian value, as being the only specimens extant of the oracles of a barbarous tribe; the Evangelists are to be interpreted with a due allowance for their superstitious prejudices concerning evil spirits, and St. Paul never suffers them to forget that he had been brought up at the feet of a Jewish Rabbi! The Greeks indeed were a fine people in works of taste; but as to their philosophers! the writings of Plato are smoke and flash from the witch's cauldron of a disturbed imagination! Aristotle's works a quickset hedge of fruitless and thorny distinctions! and all the philosophers before Plato and Aristotle fablers and allegorisers!

But these men have had their day: and there are signs of the times clearly announcing that that day is verging to its close. Even now there are not a few, on whose convictions it will not be uninfluencive to know, that the power by which men are led to the truth of things, instead of the appearances, was deemed and entitled the living and substantial Word of God by the soundest of the Hebrew doctors; that the eldest and most profound of the Greek philosophers demanded assent to their doctrine, mainly as σοφία θεοπαράδοτος, *i. e.*, a traditionary wisdom that had its origin in inspiration; that these men referred the same power to the



πῶς αἰζῶν ὑπὸ διοικούντος ΛΟΓΟΥ; and that they were scarcely less express than their scholar Philo Judæus in their affirmations of the Logos, as no mere attribute or quality, no mode of abstraction, no personification, but literally and mysteriously *Deus alter et idem*.

When education has disciplined the minds of our gentry for austerer study; when educated men will be ashamed to look abroad for truths that can be only found within; within themselves they will discover, intuitively will they discover, the distinctions between "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and the understanding, which forms the *peculium* of each man, as different in extent and value from another man's understanding as his estate may be from his neighbour's estate. The words of St. John, from the 7th to the 12th verse of his first chapter, are in their whole extent interpretable of the understanding, which derives its rank and mode of being in the human race (that is, as far as it may be contrasted with the instinct of the dog or elephant, in all which constitutes it human understanding) from the universal light. This light, therefore, comes as to its own. Being rejected, it leaves the understanding to a world of dreams and darkness: for in it alone is life, and the life is the light of men. What then but apparitions can remain to a philosophy which strikes death through all things visible and invisible; satisfies itself then only when it can explain those abstractions of the outward senses, which by an unconscious irony it names indifferently facts and phenomena, mechanically that is, by the laws of death; and brands with the name of mysticism every solution grounded in life, or the powers and intuitions of life?

On the other hand, if the light be received by faith, to such understandings it delegates the privilege (*ἐξουσίαν*) to become sons of God, expanding while it elevates, even as the beams of the sun incorporate with the mist, and make its natural darkness and earthly nature the bearer and interpreter of their own glory. Ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσητε, οὐ μὴ συνῆτε.

The very same truth is found in a fragment of the Ephesian Heraclitus, preserved by Stobæus, and in somewhat different words by Diogenes Laertius. Ζὼν νόφ λέγοντας ἰσχυρίζεσθαι χρὴ τῷ ξυνῷ πάντων τρέφονται γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀνθρώπινοι νόοι ὑπὸ ἐνὸς τοῦ θείου (Λόγου) κρατεῖ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ὁ κόσμος ἐθέλει, καὶ ἐξαρκεῖ πᾶσι καὶ περιγίνεται. Translation:—To discourse rationally (=if we would render the discursive understanding "discourse of reason"), it behoves us to derive strength from that which is common to all

men (=the light that lighteth every man). For all human understandings are nourished by the one Divine Word, whose power is commensurate with His will, and is sufficient for all and overfloweth (=shineth in darkness, and is not contained therein, or comprehended by the darkness).

This was Heraclitus, whose book is nearly six hundred years older than the gospel of St. John, and who was proverbially entitled the dark (*ὁ σκοτεινός*). But it was a darkness which Socrates would not condemn, and which would probably appear to enlightened Christians the darkness of prophecy, had the work which he hid in the temple been preserved to us. But obscurity is a word of many meanings. It may be in the subject; it may be in the author; or it may be in the reader; and this again may originate in the state of the reader's heart; or in that of his capacity; or in his temper; or in his accidental associations. Two kinds are especially pointed out by the divine Plato in his *Sophistes*. The beauty of the original is beyond my reach. On my anxiety to give the fulness of the thought, I must ground my excuse for construing rather than translating. The fidelity of the version may well atone for its harshness in a passage that deserves a meditation beyond the ministry of words, even the words of Plato himself, though in them, or nowhere, are to be heard the sweet sounds that issued from the head of Memnon at the touch of light. "One thing is the hardness-to-be-understood of the sophist, another that of the philosopher. 'The former retreating into the obscurity of that which hath not true being (*τοῦ μὴ ὄντος*), and by long intercourse accustomed to the same, is hard to be known on account of the duskiess of the place. But the philosopher by contemplation of pure reason evermore approximating to the idea of true being (*τοῦ ὄντος*), is by no means easy to be seen on account of the splendour of that region. For the intellectual eyes of the many flit, and are incapable of looking fixedly towards the god-like."

There are, I am aware, persons who willingly admit that not in articles of faith alone, but in the heights of geometry, and even in the necessary first principles of natural philosophy, there exist truths of apodictic force in reason, which the mere understanding strives in vain to comprehend. Take, as an instance, the ascending series of infinites in every finite, a position which involves a contradiction for the understanding, yet follows demonstrably from the very definition of body as that which fills a space. For wherever there is a space filled, there must be an extension to be divided. When therefore maxims generalised from appearances

(phenomena) are applied to substances; when rules, abstracted or deduced from the forms in time and space, are used as measures of spiritual being, yea, even of the Divine Nature, which cannot be compared or classed ("for My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are My ways your ways, saith the Lord"—Isaiah lv. 8)—such professors cannot but protest against the whole process, as grounded on a gross metathesis *εἰς ἄλλο γένος*. Yet still they are disposed to tolerate it as a sort of sanative counter-excitement, that holds in check the more dangerous disease of methodism. But I more than doubt of both the positions. I do not think methodism, Calvinistic or Wesleyan, the more dangerous disease; and even if it were, I should deny that it is at all likely to be counteracted by the rational christianity of our modern Alogi (*λόγος πίστεως ἀλογος*!), who, mistaking unity for sameness, have been pleased by a misnomer not less contradictory to their own tenets than intolerant to those of Christians in general, to entitle themselves Unitarians. The two contagions attack each a wholly different class of minds and tempers, and each tends to produce and justify the other, according as the predisposition of the patient may chance to be. If fanaticism be as a fire in the flooring of the church, the idolism of the unspiritualised understanding is the dry rot in its beams and timbers. *Ὑβριν χρὴ σβεννύειν μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν*, says Heraclitus. It is not the sect of Unitarian dissenters, but the spirit of unitarianism in the members of the Established Church, that alarms me. To what open revilings, and to what whispered slanders, I subject my name by this public avowal, I well know: *ἀπίστους γὰρ τινὰς εἶναι ἐπιστῖφω* *Ἡράκλειτός, φησιν, ἀκούσαι οὐκ ἐπισταμένους οὐδ' εἰπεῖν* *ἀλλὰ καὶ, κύνας ὧς, βαῦζουσιν ἐν ἡν μὴ γινώσκωσι.*

(E.)

The term idea, is an instance in point; and I hazard this assertion, together with the preceding sentences, in the full consciousness that they must be unintelligible to those who have yet to learn that an idea is equidistant in its signification from sensation, image, fact, and notion: that it is the antithesis not the synonyme of *εἶδωλον*. The magnificent son of Cosmo was wont to discourse with Ficino, Politian, and the princely Mirandula on the ideas of will, God, and immortality. The accomplished author of the Arcadia, the star of serenest brilliance in the glorious constellation of Elizabeth's court, our England's Sir Philip Sidney! He, the paramount gentleman of Europe, the

poet, warrior, and statesman, held high converse with Spenser on the idea of supersensual beauty; on all "earthly fair and amiable," as the symbol of that idea; and on music and poesy as its living educts. With the same genial reverence did the younger Algernon commune with Harrington and Milton on the idea of a perfect state; and in what sense it is true, that the men (*i. e.*, the aggregate of the inhabitants of a country at any one time) are made for the state, not the state for the men. But these lights shine no longer, or for a few. *Exeunt*: and enter in their stead Holofernes and Costard, masked as Metaphysics and Commonsense. And these, too, have *their* ideas! The former has an idea, that Hume, Hartley, and Condillac have exploded all ideas but those of sensation; he has an idea that he was particularly pleased with the fine *idea* of the last-named philosopher, that there is no absurdity in asking what colour virtue is of? inasmuch as the proper philosophic answer would be black, blue, or bottle-green, according as the coat, waistcoat, and small-clothes might chance to be of the person the series of whose motions had excited the sensations which formed our idea of virtue. The latter has no idea of a better-flavoured haunch of venison than he dined off at the Albion: he admits that the French have an excellent idea of cooking in general, but holds that their best cooks have no more idea of dressing a turtle than the gourmands themselves, at Paris, have of the true taste and colour of the fat!

It is not impossible that a portion of the high value attached of late years to the dates and margins of our old folios and quartos, may be transferred to their contents. Even now there exists a shrewd suspicion in the minds of reading men, that not only Plato and Aristotle, but even Scotus Erigena, and the schoolmen from Peter Lombard to Duns Scotus, are not such mere blockheads as they pass for with those who have never perused a line of their writings. What the results may be should this ripen into conviction, I can but guess. But all history seems to favour the persuasion I entertain, that in every age the speculative philosophy in general acceptance, the metaphysical opinions that happen to be predominant, will influence the theology of that age. | Whatever is proposed for the belief, as true, must have been previously admitted by reason as possible, as involving no contradiction to the universal forms (or laws) of thought, no incompatibility in the terms of the proposition; and the determination on this head belongs exclusively to the science of metaphysics. In each article of faith embraced on conviction, the mind determines, first, intuitively on its logical possibility; secondly, discursively

on its analogy to doctrines already believed, as well as on its correspondence to the wants and faculties of our nature; and thirdly, historically, on the direct and indirect evidences. But the probability of an event is a part of its historic evidence, and constitutes its presumptive proof, or the evidence *à priori*. Now, as the evidence *à posteriori* requisite in order to a satisfactory proof of the actual occurrence of any fact stands in an inverse ratio to the strength or weakness of the evidence *à priori* (that is, a fact probable in itself may be believed on slight testimony), it is manifest that of the three factors, by which the mind is determined to the admission or rejection of the point in question, the last must be greatly influenced by the second, and that both depend on the first, not indeed as their cause or preconstituent, but as their indispensable condition; so that the very inquiry concerning them is preposterous ( $\text{=σόφισμα τοῦ Ὑπερέου Ππορίου}$ ) as long as the first remains undetermined. Again: the history of human opinions (ecclesiastical and philosophical history) confirms, by manifold instances, what attentive consideration of the position itself might have authorized us to presume; namely, that on all such subjects as are out of the sphere of the senses, and therefore incapable of a direct proof from outward experience, the question whether any given position is logically impossible (incompatible with reason) or only incomprehensible (*i. e.* not reducible to the forms of sense; namely, time and space, or those of the understanding; namely, quantity, quality, and relation)—in other words, the question, whether an assertion be in itself inconceivable, or only by us unimaginable, will be decided by each individual according to the positions assumed as first principles in the metaphysical system which he had previously adopted. Thus the existence of a Supreme Reason, the Creator of the material universe, involved a contradiction for a disciple of Epicurus, who had convinced himself that causative thought was tantamount to something out of nothing, or substance out of shadow, and incompatible with the axiom *Nihil ex nihilo*: while, on the contrary, to a Platonist the position is necessarily presupposed in every other truth, as that without which every fact of experience would involve a contradiction in reason. Now it is not denied that the framers of our Church Liturgy, Homilies and Articles, entertained metaphysical opinions irreconcilable in their first principles with the system of speculative philosophy which has been taught in this country, and only not universally received, since the asserted and generally believed defeat of the Bishop of Worcester (the excellent Stillingfleet) in his famous

controversy with Mr. Locke. Assuredly therefore it is well worth the consideration of our Established Clergy whether it is at all probable in itself, or congruous with experience, that the disputed Articles of our Church *de revelatis et credendis* should be adopted with singleness of heart, and in the light of knowledge, when the grounds and first philosophy, on which the framers themselves rested the antecedent credibility (may we not add even the revealability?) of the Articles in question, have been exchanged for principles the most dissimilar, if not contrary? It may be said, and truly, that the Scriptures, and not metaphysical systems, are our best and ultimate authority. And, doubtless, on Revelation must we rely for the truth of the doctrines. Yet what is held incapable of being conceived as possible will be deemed incapable of having been revealed as real; and that philosophy has hitherto had a negative voice, as to the interpretation of the Scriptures in high and doctrinal points, is proved by the course of argument adopted in the controversial volumes of all the orthodox divines from Origen to Bishop Bull, as well as by the very different sense attached to the same texts by the disciples of the modern *meta-physique*, wherever they have been at liberty to form their own creeds according to their own expositions.

I repeat the question then: Is it likely that the faith of our ancestors will be retained when their philosophy is rejected? rejected *à priori*, as baseless notions not worth inquiring into, as obsolete errors which it would be slaying the slain to confute? Should the answer be in the negative, it would be no strained inference that the Clergy at least, as the conservators of the national faith, and the accredited representatives of learning in general amongst us, might with great advantage to their own peace of mind qualify themselves to judge for themselves concerning the comparative worth and solidity of the two schemes. Let them make the experiment, whether a patient re-hearing of their predecessors' cause, with enough of predilection for the men to counterpoise the prejudices against their system, might not induce them to move for a new trial—a result of no mean importance in my opinion, were it on this account alone, that it would recall certain ex-dignitaries in the book-republic from their long exile on the shelves of our public libraries to their old familiar station on the reading desks of our theological students. However strong the presumption were in favour of principles authorized by names that must needs be so dear and venerable to a minister of the Church of England, as those of Hooker, Whitaker, Field, Donne, Selden, Stillingfleet (masculine intellects, formed under the robust

discipline of an age memorable for keenness of research and iron industry), yet no undue preponderance from any previous weight in this scale will be apprehended by minds capable of estimating the counter-weights, which it must first bring to a balance in the scale opposite! The obstinacy of opinions that have always been taken for granted! opinions unassailable even by the remembrance of a doubt! the silent accrescence of belief from the unwatched depositions of a general, never-contradicted, hearsay, the concurring suffrage of modern books, all pre-supposing or re-asserting the same principles with the same confidence, and with the same contempt for all prior systems!—and among these, works of highest authority, appealed to in our legislature and lectured on at our Universities; the very books, perhaps, that called forth our own first efforts in thinking! the solutions and confutations in which must therefore have appeared tenfold more satisfactory from their having given us our first information of the difficulties to be solved, of the opinions to be confuted!—Verily, a clergyman's partiality towards the tenets of his forefathers must be intense beyond all precedent, if it can more than sustain itself against antagonists so strong in themselves, and with such mighty adjuncts!

Nor in this enumeration dare I (though fully aware of the obloquy to which I am exposing myself) omit the noticeable fact, that we have attached a portion even of our national glory (not only to the system itself, that system of disguised and decorous Epicureanism, which has been the only orthodox philosophy of the last hundred years; but also, and more emphatically) to the name of the assumed father of the system, who raised it to its present "pride of place," and almost universal acceptance throughout Europe. And how was this effected? Extrinsically, by all the causes, consequences, and accompaniments of the Revolution in 1688: by all the opinions, interests, and passions which counteracted by the sturdy prejudices of the malcontents with the Revolution; qualified by the compromising character of its chief conductors; not more propelled by the spirit of enterprise and hazard in our commercial towns, than held in check by the characteristic *vis inertiae* of the peasantry and landholders; both parties cooled and lessoned by the equal failure of the destruction, and of the restoration, of monarchy; it was effected extrinsically, I say, by the same influences, which (not in and of themselves, but with all these and sundry other modifications) combined under an especial control of Providence to perfect and secure the majestic temple of the British Constitution!—But the very same which in France,

without this providential counterpoise, overthrew the motley fabric of feudal oppression to build up in its stead the madhouse of Jacobinism! Intrinsically, and as far as the philosophic scheme itself is alone concerned, it was effected by the mixed policy and *bonhomie* with which the author contrived to retain in his celebrated work whatever the system possesses of soothing for the indolence, and of flattering for the vanity, of men's average understandings: while he kept out of sight all its darker features, that outraged the instinctive faith and moral feelings of mankind, ingeniously threading on the dried and shrivelled, yet still wholesome and nutritious fruits, plucked from the rich grafts of ancient wisdom, to the barren and worse than barren fig-tree of the mechanic philosophy. Thus the sensible Christians, "the angels of the church of Laodicea," with the numerous and mighty sect of their admirers, delighted with the discovery that they could purchase the decencies and the creditableness of religion at so small an expenditure of faith, extolled the work for its pious conclusions: while the infidels, wiser in their generation than the children (at least than these nominal children) of light, eulogized it with no less zeal for the sake of its principles and assumptions, and with the foresight of those obvious and only legitimate conclusions that might and would be deduced from them. Great at all times and almost incalculable are the influences of party spirit in exaggerating contemporary reputation; but never perhaps "from the first syllable of recorded time" were they exerted under such a concurrence and conjunction of fortunate accidents, of helping and furthering events and circumstances, as in the instance of Mr. Locke.

I am most fully persuaded, that the principles both of taste, morals, and religion, taught in our most popular compendia of moral and political philosophy, natural theology, evidences of Christianity, &c., are false, injurious, and debasing. But I am likewise not less deeply convinced, that all the well-meant attacks on the writings of modern infidels and heretics, in support either of the miracles or of the mysteries of the Christian religion, can be of no permanent utility, while the authors themselves join in the vulgar appeal to common sense as the one infallible judge in matters which become subjects of philosophy only, because they involve a contradiction between this common sense and our moral instincts, and require therefore an arbiter, which containing both (*eminenter*) must be higher than either. We but mow down the rank of misgrowth instead of cleansing the soil, as long as we ourselves protect and manure, as the pride of our garden, a tree



of false knowledge, which looks fair and showy and variegated with fruits not its own, that hang from the branches which have at various times been ingrafted on its stem; but from the roots of which underground the runners are sent off, that shoot up at a distance and bring forth the true and natural crop. I will speak plainly, though in so doing I must bid defiance to all the flatterers of the folly and foolish self-opinion of the half-instructed many. The articles of our Church, and the true principles of government and social order, will never be effectually and consistently maintained against their antagonists till the champions have themselves ceased to worship the same Baal with their enemies, till they have cast out the common idol from the recesses of their own convictions, and with it the whole service and ceremonial of idolism. While all parties agree in their abjuration of Plato and Aristotle, and in their contemptuous neglect of the Schoolmen and the scholastic logic, without which the excellent Selden (that genuine English mind whose erudition, broad, deep, and manifold as it was, is yet less remarkable than his robust healthful common sense) affirms it (see his *Table-Talk*) impossible for a Divine thoroughly to comprehend or reputably to defend the whole undiminished and unadulterated scheme of Catholic faith: while all alike pre-assume, with Mr. Locke, that the mind contains only the relics of the senses, and therefore proceed with him to explain the substance from the shadow, the voice from the echo: they can but detect each the other's inconsistencies. The champion of orthodoxy will victoriously expose the bald and staring incongruity of the Socinian scheme with the language of Scripture and with the final causes of all revealed religion:—the Socinian will retort on the orthodox the incongruity of a belief in mysteries, with his own admissions concerning the origin and nature of all tenable ideas, and as triumphantly expose the pretences of believing in a form of words, to which the believer himself admits that he can attach no consistent meaning. Lastly, the godless materialist, as the only consistent because the only consequent reasoner, will secretly laugh at both. If these sentiments should be just, the consequences are so important that every well-educated man who has given proofs that he has at least partially studied the subject, deserves a patient hearing. Had I not the authority of the greatest and noblest intellects for at least two thousand years on my side, yet from the vital interest of the opinions themselves, and their natural, unconstrained, and (as it were) spontaneous coalescence with the faith of the Catholic Church (they being, moreover, the opinions of its most eminent

Fathers), I might appeal to all orthodox Christians, whether they adhere to the faith only, or both to the faith and forms of the Established Church, in the words of my motto: *Ad isthæc quæso vos, qualiacumque primo videantur aspectu, attendite ut qui vobis forsan insanire videar, saltem quibus insaniam rationibus cognoscatis.*

There are still a few, however, young men of loftiest minds, and the very stuff out of which the sword and shield of truth and honour are to be made, who will not withdraw all confidence from the writer, although

" 'Tis true, that, passionate for ancient truths  
And honouring with religious love the great  
Of elder times, he hated to excess,  
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,  
The hollow puppets of a hollow age,  
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever  
Its worthless idols !"

a few there are, who will still less be indisposed to follow him in his milder mood, whenever their Friend,

" Piercing the long-neglected holy Cave,  
The haunt obscure of Old Philosophy,  
Shall bid with lifted torch its starry walls  
Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame  
Of odorous lamps tended by saint and sage !"

I have hinted above at the necessity of a glossary, and I will conclude these supplementary remarks with a nomenclature of the principal terms that occur in the elements of speculative philosophy, in their old and rightful sense, according to my belief; at all events, the sense in which I have myself employed them. The most general term (*genus summum*) belonging to the speculative intellect, as distinguished from acts of the will, is representation, or (still better) presentation.

A conscious presentation, if it refers exclusively to the subject as a modification of his own state of being is = sensation.

The same if it refers to an object is = perception.

A perception, immediate and individual, is = an intuition.

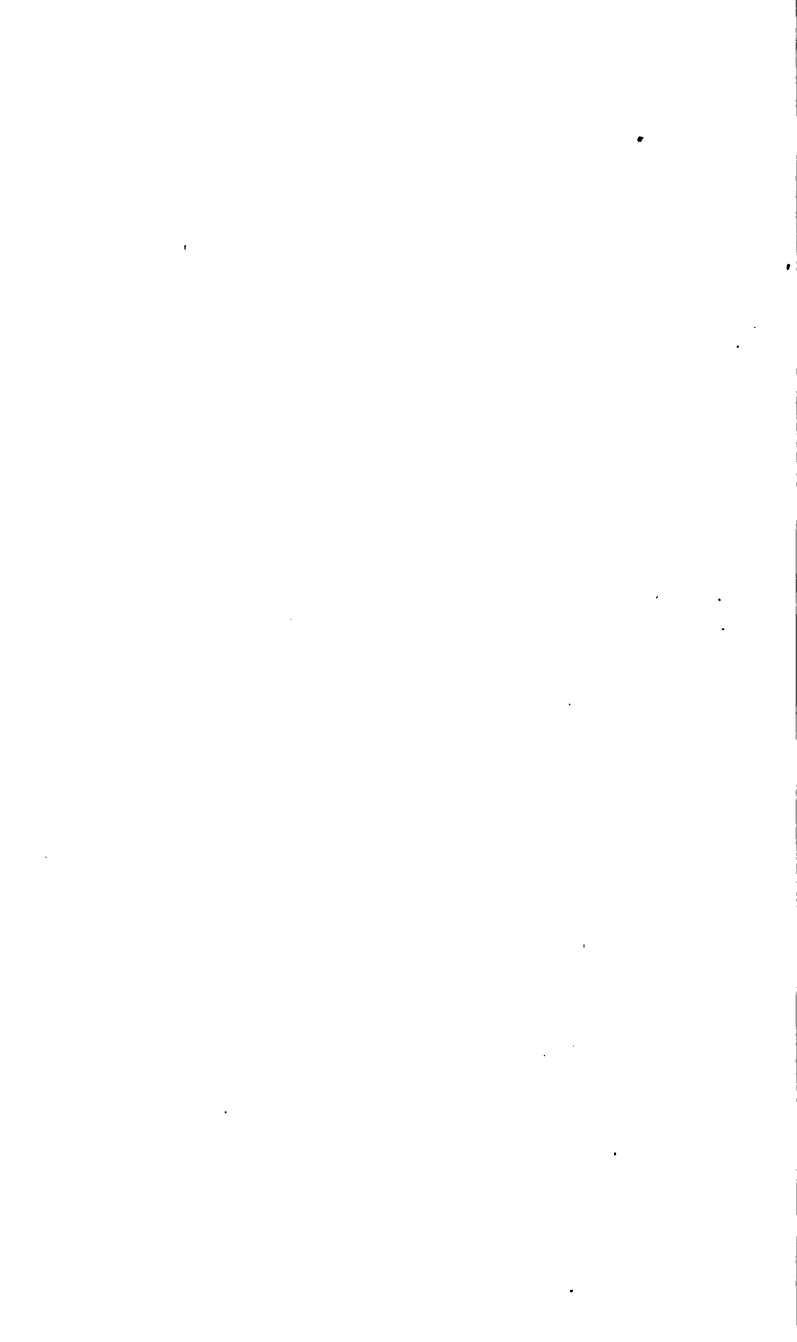
The same, mediate, and by means of a character or mark common to several things, is = a conception.

A conception, extrinsic and sensuous, is = a fact, or a cognition.

The same, purely mental and abstracted from the forms of the understanding itself, = a notion.

A notion may be realised, and becomes cognition; but that which is neither a sensation or a perception, that which is neither individual (*i. e.* a sensible intuition) nor general (*i. e.* a conception).

which neither refers to outward facts, nor yet is abstracted from the forms of perception contained in the understanding, but which is an educt of the imagination actuated by the pure reason, to which there neither is nor can be an adequate correspondent in the world of the senses—this and this alone is = an idea. Whether ideas are regulative only, according to Aristotle and Kant; or likewise constitutive, and one with the power and life of Nature, according to Plato and Plotinus (*ἐν λόγῳ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων*), is the highest *problem* of philosophy, and not part of its nomenclature.



*“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters!”*

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A LAY SERMON,

ADDRESSED TO THE

HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES,

ON THE EXISTING

**Distresses and Discontents.**

BY

S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

*Ἐὰν μὴ ἐλπίζητε, ἀνελπιστον οὐκ εὕρησете, ἀνεξερευνήτων ὃν καὶ ἄπορον.*

HERACLITUS *apud Theodoret*, Vol. iv. p. 716.

*“If ye do not hope, ye will not find: for in despairing ye block up the mine at its mouth: ye extinguish the torch, even when ye are already in the shaft.”*

LONDON.

1817.

God and the world we worship still together,  
Draw not our laws to Him, but His to ours;  
Untrue to both, so prosperous in neither,  
The imperfect will brings forth but barren flowers!  
Unwise as all distracted interests be,  
Strangers to God, fools in humanity:  
Too good for great things and too great for good,  
While still "*I dare not*" waits upon "*I would I*"

## INTRODUCTION.

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**FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN!** You, I mean, who fill the higher and middle stations of society! The comforts, perchance the splendours, that surround you designate your rank, but cannot constitute your moral and personal fitness for it. Be it enough for others to know, that you are its legal—but by what mark shall you stand accredited to your own consciences as its worthy—possessors? Not by common sense or common honesty; for these are equally demanded of all classes, and therefore mere negative qualifications in your rank of life, or characteristic only by the aggravated ignominy consequent on their absence. Not by genius or splendid talent: for these, as being gifts of nature, are objects of moral interest for those alone to whom they have been allotted. Nor yet by eminence in learning; for this supposes such a devotion of time and thought, as would in many cases be incompatible with the claims of active life. Erudition is, doubtless, an ornament that especially befits a high station: but it is professional rank only that renders its attainment a duty.

The mark in question must be so far common, that we may be entitled to look for it in you from the mere circumstance of your situation, and so far distinctive that it must be such as cannot be expected generally from the inferior classes. Now, either there is no such criterion in existence, or the desideratum is to be found in an habitual consciousness of the ultimate principles to which your opinions are traceable. The least that can be demanded of the least favoured among you, is an earnest endeavour to walk in the light of your own knowledge; and not, as the mass of mankind, by laying hold on the skirts of custom. Blind followers of a blind and capricious guide, forced likewise (though oftener, I fear, by their own improvidence,\* than by the

\* A truth, that should not however be said save in the spirit of charity, and with the palliating reflection, that this very improvidence has hitherto been, though not the inevitable, yet the natural result of poverty

and the Poor Laws. With what gratitude I venerate my country and its laws, my humble publications from the "Fears in Solitude" printed in 1798, to the present discourse bear witness. Yet the poor laws and the revenue!

lowness of their estate) to consume life in the means of living, the multitude may make the sad confession,

*"Tempora mutantur : nos et mutamur in illis,"*

unabashed. But to English Protestants in the enjoyment of a present competency, much more to such as are defended against the anxious future, it must needs be a grievous dishonour (and not the less grievous, though perhaps less striking, from its frequency) to change with the times, and thus to debase their motives and maxims, the sacred household of conscience, into slaves and creatures of fashion. Thou, therefore, art inexcusable, O man ! (Rom. ii. 1) if thou dost not give to thyself a reason for the faith that is in thee : if thou dost not thereby learn the safety and the blessedness of that other apostolic precept, Whatsoever ye do, do it in faith. Your habits of reflection should at least be equal to your opportunities of leisure, and to that which is itself a *species* of leisure—your immunity from bodily labour, from the voice and lash of the imperious ever-recurring this day ! Your attention to the objects, that stretch away below you in the living landscape of good and evil, and your researches into their existing or practicable bearings on each other, should be proportional to the elevation that extends and diversifies your prospect. If you possess more than is necessary for your own wants, more than your own wants ought to be felt by you as your own interests. You are pacing on a smooth terrace, which you

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—if I permitted myself to dwell on these exclusively, I should be tempted to fancy that the domestic seals were put in commission and entrusted to Argus, Briareus, and Cacus, as lords of the commonalty. Alas ! it is easy to see the evil ; but to imagine a remedy is difficult in exact proportion to the experience and good sense of the seeker. That excellent man, Mr. Perceval, whom I regard as the best and wisest statesman this country has possessed since the revolution (I judge only from his measures and the reports of his speeches in parliament : for I never saw him, that I know of), went into the ministry, with the design as well as the wish of abolishing lotteries. I was present at a table, when this intention was announced by a venerable relative of the departed statesman, who loved and honoured the man, but widely dissented from him as a politician. Except myself, all present were partizans of the opposition ; but all avowed their determination on this score alone, as a great moral precedent, to support the new minister. What was the result ? Two lotteries in the first year instead of one ! The door of the cabinet has a quality the

most opposite to the ivory gate of Virgil. It suffers no dreams to pass through it. Alas ! as far as any wide scheme of benevolence is concerned, the inscription over it might seem to be the Dantean :

*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate !*

We judge harshly because we expect irrationally. But, on the other hand, this disproportion of the power to the wish will, sooner or later, end in that tame acquiescence in things as they are, which is the sad symptom of a moral *necrosis* commencing. And commence it will, if its causes are not counteracted by the philosophy of history, that is, by history read in the spirit of prophecy ! if they are not overcome by the faith which, still re-kindling hope, still re-enlivens charity. Without the knowledge of man, the knowledge of men is a hazardous acquisition. What insight might not our statesmen acquire from the study of the Bible merely as history, if only they had been previously accustomed to study history in the same spirit as that in which good men read the Bible !



owe to the happy institutions of your country—a terrace on the mountain's breast. To what purpose, by what moral right, if you continue to gaze only on the sod beneath your feet? Or if, converting means into ends, and with all your thoughts and efforts absorbed in selfish schemes of climbing cloudward, you turn your back on the wide landscape and stoop the lower the higher you ascend?

The remedial and prospective advantages that may be rationally anticipated from the habit of contemplating particulars in their universal laws; its tendency at once to fix and to liberalize the morality of private life, at once to produce and enlighten the spirit of public zeal and, let me add, its especial utility in recalling the origin and primary purport of the term generosity\* to the heart and thoughts of a populace tampered with by sophists and incendiaries of the revolutionary school; these advantages I have felt it my duty and have made it my main object to press on your serious attention during the whole period of my literary labours from earliest manhood to the present hour.† Whatever may have been the specific theme of my communications, and whether they related to criticism, politics, or religion, still principles, their subordination, their connection, and their application in all the divisions of our tastes, duties, rules of conduct and schemes of belief, have constituted my chapter of contents.

It is an unsafe partition, that divides opinions without principle from unprincipled opinions. If the latter are not followed by correspondent actions, we are indebted for the escape, not to the agent himself, but to his habits of education, to the sympathies of superior rank, to the necessity of character, often, perhaps, to the absence of temptation from providential circumstances or the accident of a gracious nature. These, indeed, are

\* *A genere*: the qualities either supposed natural and instinctive to men of noble race, or such as their rank is calculated to inspire, as disinterestedness, devotion to the service of their friends and clients, frankness, &c.

† In testimony of the fact, and no less of the small change, my own public and political principles have undergone, I might appeal to the *Conciones ad Populum*, delivered at Bristol in the year 1794; but that, though a few copies were printed, they can scarcely be said to have been published. The first of these "Lay-Sermons" (which was likewise the firstling of my authorship) I intend to include in the republication or rather the *refacimento* of *The Friend*. I prefer the latter word, because every part will be

omitted which could not be brought to conclusion and completion within the extent allotted to the work (three volumes of the size of the British Essayists); their place supplied by new articles; and the whole arranged anew. The *Friend* likewise has never been published in the ordinary sense of the term. The numbers printed weekly on stamped paper were sent by the post to a scanty number of subscribers and (a sad but important distinction!) to a still scantier number of subscriptionists.—*πανόριον συνέτοιον ἐς δὲ τὸ Παν ἑμπνέως χαρίζετ.*

[The edition of *The Friend* here referred to has recently been reprinted in one volume in Bohn's Standard Library.]

truths of all times and places; but I seemed to see especial reason for insisting on them in our own times. A long and attentive observation had convinced me, that formerly men were worse than their principles, but that at present the principles are worse than the men.

Few are sufficiently aware how much reason most of us have, even as common moral livers, to thank God for being Englishmen. It would furnish grounds both for humility towards Providence and for increased attachment to our country, if each individual could but see and feel how large a part of his innocence he owes to his birth, breeding, and residence in Great Britain. The administration of the laws; the almost continual preaching of moral prudence; the number and respectability of our sects; the pressure of our ranks on each other, with the consequent reserve and watchfulness of demeanour in the superior ranks, and the emulation in the subordinate; the vast depth, expansion, and systematic movements of our trade; and the consequent interdependence, the arterial or nerve-like net-work of property, which make every deviation from outward integrity a calculable loss to the offending individual himself from its mere effects, as obstruction and irregularity; and lastly, the naturalness of doing as others do:—these and the like influences, peculiar, some in the kind and all in the degree, to this privileged island, are the buttresses on which our foundationless well-doing is upheld, even as a house of cards, the architecture of our infancy, in which each is supported by all.

Well then may we pray, Give us peace in our time, O Lord! Well for us if no revolution or other general visitation betray the true state of our national morality! But, above all, well will it be for us if *even now* we dare disclose the secret to our own souls! Well will it be for as many of us as have duly reflected on the Prophet's assurance, that we must take root downwards if we would bear fruit upwards; if we would bear fruit, and *continue* to bear fruit, when the foodful plants that stand straight, only because they grow in company, or whose slender surface-roots owe their whole steadfastness to their inter-tanglement, have been beaten down by the continued rains, or whirled aloft by the sudden hurricane! Nor have we far to seek for whatever it is most important that we should find. The wisdom from above has not ceased for us: "The principles of the oracles of God" (Heb. v. 12) are still uttered from before the altar! Oracles, which we may consult without cost! Before an altar, where no sacrifice is required, but of the vices which unman us! no victims

demanded, but the unclean and animal passions, which we may have suffered to house within us, forgetful of our baptismal dedication—no victim, but the spiritual sloth, or goat, or fox, or hog, which lay waste the vineyard that the Lord had fenced and planted for Himself.

I have endeavoured in my previous discourse to persuade the more highly gifted and educated part of my friends and fellow-Christians, that as the New Testament sets forth the means and conditions of spiritual convalescence, with all the laws of conscience relative to our future state and permanent being, so does the Bible present to us the elements of public prudence, instructing us in the true causes, the surest preventives, and the only cures of public evils. The authorities of Raleigh, Clarendon, and Milton must at least exempt me from the blame of singularity if, undeterred by the contradictory charges of paradoxy from one party and of adherence to vulgar and old-fashioned prejudices from the other, I persist in avowing my conviction, that the inspired poets, historians, and sententiaries of the Jews are the clearest teachers of political economy: in short, that their writings\* are the Statesman's best manual, not only as containing the first principles and ultimate grounds of state-policy, whether in prosperous times or in those of danger and distress, but as

\* To which I should be tempted with the late Edmund Burke to annex that treasure of prudential wisdom, the *Ecclesiasticus*. I not only yield, however, to the authority of our Church, but reverence the judgment of its founders in separating this work from the list of the Canonical Books, and in refusing to apply it to the establishment of any doctrine, while they caused it to be "read for example of life and instruction of manners." Excellent, nay, invaluable, as this book is in the place assigned to it by our Church, that place is justified on the clearest grounds. For not to say that the compiler himself candidly cautions us against the imperfections of his translation, and its no small difference from the original Hebrew, as it was written by his grandfather, he so expresses himself in his prologue as to exclude all claims to inspiration or divine authority in any other or higher sense than every writer is entitled to make who, having qualified himself by the careful study of the books of other men, had been drawn on to write something himself. But of still greater weight, practically, are the objections derived from certain passages of the book, which savour too plainly of the fancies and prejudices of a Jew of Jerusalem: e.g. the 25th and 26th verses of Chapter I.; and of greater still the objections drawn from other passages, as from Chapter XII., which by implication and obvious inference are

nearly tantamount to a denial of a future state, and bear too great a resemblance to the ethics of the Greek poets and orators in the substitution of posthumous fame for a true resurrection, and a consequent personal endurance; the substitution, in short, of a nominal for a real immortality; and lastly, from the prudential spirit of the maxims in general, in which prudence is taught too much on its own grounds instead of being recommended as the organ or vehicle of a spiritual principle in its existing worldly relations. In short, prudence ceases to be wisdom when it is not to the filial fear of God, and to the sense of the excellence of the divine laws, what the body is to the soul! Now, in the work of the son of Sirach, prudence is both body and soul.

It were perhaps to be wished that this work, and the Wisdom of Solomon, had alone received the honour of being accompaniments to the inspired writings, and that these should, with a short precautionary preface and a few notes, have been printed in all our Bibles. The remaining books might without any loss have been left for the learned or for as many as were prompted by curiosity to purchase them, in a separate volume. Even of the Maccabees not above a third part can be said to possess any historic value, as authentic accounts.

supplying likewise the details of their application, and as being a full and spacious repository of precedents and facts in proof.

Well therefore (again and again I repeat to you)—well will it be for us if we have provided ourselves from this armoury while “yet the day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity” appears at far distance only “in the valley of Vision,” if we have humbled ourselves and have confessed our thin and unsound state, even while “from the uttermost parts of the earth we were hearing songs of praise and glory to the upright nation.” (Isaiah xxii. 5; xxiv. 16.)

But if, indeed, the day of treading down is present, it is still in our power to convert it into a time of substantial discipline for ourselves, and of enduring benefit to the present generation and to posterity. The splendour of our exploits during the late war is less honourable to us than the magnanimity of our views, and our generous confidence in the victory of the better cause. Accordingly, we have obtained a good name, so that the nations around us have displayed a disposition to follow our example and imitate our institutions—too often, I fear, even in parts where, from the difference of our relative circumstances, the imitation had little chance of proving more than mimicry. But it will be far more glorious, and to our neighbours incomparably more instructive, if, in distresses to which all countries are liable, we bestir ourselves in remedial and preventive arrangements which all nations may more or less adopt; inasmuch as they are grounded on principles intelligible to all rational and obligatory on all moral beings; inasmuch as, having been taught by God’s word, exemplified by God’s providence, commanded by God’s law, and recommended by promises of God’s grace, they alone can form the foundations of a Christian community. Do we love our country? These are the principles by which the true friend of the people is contra-distinguished from the factious demagogue. They are at once the rock and the quarry. On these alone and with these alone is the solid welfare of a people to be built. Do we love our own souls? These are the principles, the neglect of which writes hypocrite and suicide on the brow of the professing Christian. For these are the keystone of that arch on which alone we can cross the torrent of life and death with safety on the passage; with peace in the retrospect; and with hope shining upon us from through the cloud toward which we are travelling. Not, my Christian friends, by all the lamps of worldly wisdom clustered in one blaze, can we guide our paths so securely as by fixing our eyes on this inevitable cloud, through which all must

pass, which at every step becomes darker and more threatening to the children of this world, but to the children of faith and obedience still thins away as we approach, to melt at length and dissolve into that glorious light, from which as so many gleams and reflections of the same falling on us during our mortal pilgrimage, we derive all principles of true and lively knowledge, alike in science and in morals, alike in communities and in individuals.

It has been my purpose throughout the following discourse to guard myself and my readers from extremes of all kinds: I will therefore conclude this Introduction by enforcing the maxim in its relation to our religious opinions, out of which, with or without our consciousness, all our other opinions flow, as from their spring-head and perpetual feeder. And that I might neglect no innocent mode of attracting or relieving the reader's attention, I have moulded my reflections into the following

### ALLEGORIC VISION.

A feeling of sadness, a peculiar melancholy, is wont to take possession of me alike in spring and in autumn. But in spring it is the melancholy of hope: in autumn it is the melancholy of resignation. As I was journeying on foot through the Apennines, I fell in with a pilgrim in whom the spring and the autumn and the melancholy of both seemed to have combined. In his discourse there were the freshness and the colours of April:

*"Qual ramicel a ramo,  
Tal da pensier pensiero  
In lui germogliava."*

But as I gazed on his whole form and figure, I bethought me of the not unlovely decays, both of age and of the late season, in the stately elm, after the clusters have been plucked from its entwining vines, and the vines are as bands of dried withies around its trunk and branches. Even so there was a memory on his smooth and ample forehead, which blended with the dedication of his steady eyes, that still looked—I know not, whether upward, or far onward, or rather to the line of meeting where the sky rests upon the distance. But how may I express—the breathed tarnish, shall I name it?—on the lustre of the pilgrim's eyes? Yet had it not a sort of strange accordance with their slow and reluctant movement, whenever he turned them to any object on the right hand or on the left? It seemed, methought, as if there lay upon the brightness a shadowy presence of dis-

appointments now unfelt, but never forgotten. It was at once the melancholy of hope and of resignation.

We had not long been fellow-travellers, ere a sudden tempest of wind and rain forced us to seek protection in the vaulted doorway of a lone chapelry: and we sat face to face, each on the stone bench alongside the low, weather-stained wall, and as close as possible to the massy door.

After a pause of silence: "Even thus," said he, "like two strangers that have fled to the same shelter from the same storm, not seldom do despair and hope meet for the first time in the porch of death!" "All extremes meet," I answered; "but yours was a strange and visionary thought." "The better then doth it beseem both the place and me," he replied. "From a visionary wilt thou hear a vision? Mark that vivid flash through this torrent of rain! Fire and water. Even here thy adage holds true, and its truth is the moral of my vision." I entreated him to proceed. Sloping his face toward the arch and yet averting his eye from it, he seemed to seek and prepare his words: till listening to the wind that echoed within the hollow edifice, and to the rain without,

"Which stole on his thoughts with its two-fold sound,  
The clash hard by and the murmur all round,"

he gradually sank away, alike from me and from his own purpose, and amid the gloom of the storm and in the duskiness of that place he sat like an emblem on a rich man's sepulchre, or like an aged mourner on the sodded grave of an only one, who is watching the waned moon and sorroweth not. Starting at length from his brief trance of abstraction, with courtesy and an atoning smile he renewed his discourse, and commenced his parable:

"During one of those short furloughs from the service of the body, which the soul may sometimes obtain even in this, its militant state, I found myself in a vast plain, which I immediately knew to be the Valley of Life. It possessed an astonishing diversity of soils: and here was a sunny spot, and there a dark one, forming just such a mixture of sunshine and shade as we may have observed on the mountain's side in an April day, when the thin broken clouds are scattered over heaven. Almost in the very entrance of the valley stood a large and gloomy pile, into which I seemed constrained to enter. Every part of the building was crowded with tawdry ornaments and fantastic deformity. On every window was portrayed, in glaring and inelegant colours, some horrible tale or preternatural incident, so that not a ray of light could enter, untinted by the medium through which it

passed. The body of the building was full of people, some of them dancing in and out, in unintelligible figures, with strange ceremonies and antic merriment, while others seemed convulsed with horror, or pining in mad melancholy. Intermingled with these, I observed a number of men, clothed in ceremonial robes, who appeared now to marshal the various groups and to direct their movements; and now, with menacing countenances, to drag some reluctant victim to a vast idol, framed of iron bars intercrossed, which formed at the same time an immense cage, and the form of a human Colossus.

"I stood for a while lost in wonder what these things might mean; when lo! one of the directors came up to me, and with a stern and reproachful look bade me uncover my head; for that the place, into which I had entered, was the temple of the only true religion, in the holier recesses of which the great goddess personally resided. Himself too he bade me reverence, as the consecrated minister of her rites. Awe-struck by the name of religion, I bowed before the priest, and humbly and earnestly intreated him to conduct me into her presence. He assented. Offerings he took from me, with mystic sprinklings of water and with salt he purified, and with strange sufflations he exorcised me; and then led me through many a dark and winding alley, the dew-damps of which chilled my flesh, and the hollow echoes under my feet, mingled, methought, with moanings, affrighted me. At length we entered a large hall where not even a single lamp glimmered. It was made half visible by the wan phosphoric rays which proceeded from inscriptions on the walls, in letters of the same pale and sepulchral light. I could read them, methought; but though each one of the words taken separately I seemed to understand, yet when I took them in sentences, they were riddles and incomprehensible. As I stood meditating on these hard sayings, my guide thus addressed me: 'The fallible becomes infallible, and the infallible remains fallible. Read and believe: these are mysteries!' In the middle of the vast hall the goddess was placed. Her features, blended with darkness, rose out to my view, terrible, yet vacant. No definite thought, no distinct image was afforded me: all was uneasy and obscure feeling. I prostrated myself before her, and then retired with my guide, soul-withered, and wondering, and dissatisfied.

"As I re-entered the body of the temple, I heard a deep buzz as of discontent. A few whose eyes were bright, and either piercing or steady, and whose ample foreheads, with the weighty bar, ridge-like, above the eyebrows, bespoke observation followed by

meditative thought, and a much larger number who were enraged by the severity and insolence of the priests in exacting their offerings, had collected in one tumultuous group, and with a confused outcry of 'This is the Temple of Superstition!' after much contumely, and turmoil, and cruel mal-treatment on all sides, rushed out of the pile: and I, methought, joined them.

"We speeded from the temple with hasty steps, and had now nearly gone round half the valley, when we were addressed by a woman, tall beyond the stature of mortals, and with a something more than human in her countenance and mien, which yet could by mortals be only felt, not conveyed by words or intelligibly distinguished. Deep reflection, animated by ardent feelings, was displayed in them; and hope, without its uncertainty, and a something more than all these, which I understood not; but which yet seemed to blend all these into a divine unity of expression. Her garments were white and matronly, and of the simplest texture. We inquired her name. My name, she replied, is Religion.

"The more numerous part of our company, affrighted by the very sound, and sore from recent impostures or sorceries, hurried onwards and examined no farther. A few of us, struck by the manifest opposition of her form and manner to those of the living Idol, whom we had so recently abjured, agreed to follow her, though with cautious circumspection. She led us to an eminence in the midst of the valley, from the top of which we could command the whole plain, and observe the relation of the different parts, of each to the other, and of each to the whole, and of all to each. She then gave us an optic glass which assisted without contradicting our natural vision, and enabled us to see far beyond the limits of the Valley of Life; though our eye even thus assisted permitted us only to behold a light and a glory, but what we could not descry, save only that it *was*, and that it was most glorious.

"And now, with the rapid transition of a dream, I had overtaken and rejoined the more numerous party, who had abruptly left us, indignant at the very name of religion. They journeyed on, goading each other with remembrances of past oppressions, and never looking back, till in the eagerness to recede from the Temple of Superstition they had rounded the whole circle of the valley. And lo! there faced us the mouth of a vast cavern, at the base of a lofty and almost perpendicular rock, the interior side of which, unknown to them, and unsuspected, formed the extreme and backward wall of the temple. An impatient crowd,



we entered the vast and dusky cave, which was the only perforation of the precipice. At the mouth of the cave sat two figures; the first, by her dress and gestures, I knew to be Sensuality; the second form, from the fierceness of his demeanour, and the brutal scornfulness of his looks, declared himself to be the monster Blasphemy. He uttered big words, and yet ever and anon I observed that he turned pale at his own courage. We entered. Some remained in the opening of the cave, with the one or the other of its guardians. The rest, and I among them, pressed on, till we reached an ample chamber, that seemed the centre of the rock. The climate of the place was unnaturally cold.

"In the furthest distance of the chamber sat an old dim-eyed man, poring with a microscope over the torso of a statue, which had neither base, nor feet, nor head; but on its breast was carved, Nature! To this he continually applied his glass, and seemed enraptured with the various inequalities which it rendered visible on the seemingly polished surface of the marble. Yet evermore was this delight and triumph followed by expressions of hatred, and vehement railing against a Being who yet, he assured us, had no existence. This mystery suddenly recalled to me what I had read in the holiest recess of the Temple of *Superstition*. The old man spoke in divers tongues, and continued to utter other and most strange mysteries. Among the rest he talked much and vehemently concerning an infinite series of causes and effects, which he explained to be—a string of blind men, the last of whom caught hold of the skirt of the one before him, he of the next, and so on till they were all out of sight; and that they all walked infallibly straight, without making one false step, though all were alike blind. Methought I borrowed courage from surprise, and asked him—Who then is at the head to guide them? He looked at me with ineffable contempt, not unmixed with an angry suspicion, and then replied, 'No one;—the string of blind men went on for ever without any beginning: for although one blind man could not move without stumbling, yet infinite blindness supplied the want of sight.' I burst into laughter, which instantly turned to terror—for as he started forward in rage, I caught a glance of him from behind; and lo! I beheld a monster biform and Janus-headed, in the hinder face and shape of which I instantly recognised the dread countenance of *Superstition*—and in the terror I awoke."



# A LAY SERMON

&c.

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ISAIAH xxxii. 20.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters."

ON all occasions the beginning should look toward the end; and most of all when we offer counsel concerning circumstances of great distress, and of still greater alarm. But such is my business at present, and the common duty of all whose competence justifies the attempt. And therefore, my Christian friends and fellow-Englishmen, have I in a day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity, taken my beginning from this animating assurance of an inspired messenger to the devisers of liberal things (Isa. xxxii. 8), who, confident in hope, are fearless in charity. For to enforce the precept involved in this gladsome annunciation of the evangelical herald, to awaken the lively feeling which it breathes, and to justify the line of conduct which it encourages, are the end to which my present efforts are directed—the ultimate object of the present address, to which all the other points therein discussed are but introductory and preparative.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters!" It is the assurance of a Prophet, and therefore surety itself to all who profess to receive him as such. It is a command in the form of a promise, which at once instructs us in our duty and forecloses every possible objection to its performance. It is at once our guide and our pioneer!—a breeze from heaven, which at one and the same time determines our path, impels us along it, and removes beforehand each overhanging cloud that might have conspired with our own dimness to bewilder or to dishearten us. Whatever our own despondence may whisper, or the reputed masters of political economy may have seemed to demonstrate, neither by the fears and scruples of the one, nor by the confident affirmations of the other dare we be deterred. They must both be false if the Prophet is true. We will still, in the power of that faith which can hope even

against hope, continue to sow beside all waters: for there is a blessing attached to it by God himself, to whose Eye all consequences are present, on whose Will all consequences depend.

But I had also an additional motive for the selection of this verse. Easy to be remembered from its briefness, likely to be remembered from its beauty, and with not a single word in it which the malignant ingenuity of faction could pervert to the excitement of any dark or turbulent feeling, I chose it both as the text and title of this discourse, that it might be brought under the eye of many thousands who will know no more of the discourse itself than what they read in the advertisements of it in our public papers.

In point of fact it was another passage of Scripture, the words of another Prophet, that originally occasioned this address, by one of those accidental circumstances that so often determine the current of our thoughts. From a company among whom the distresses of the times and the disappointments of the public expectations had been agitated with more warmth than wisdom, I had retired to solitude and silent meditation. A Bible chanced to lie open on the table, my eyes were cast idly on the page for a few seconds, till gradually as a mist clears away the following words became visible, and at once fixed my attention. "We looked for peace, but no good came; for a time of health, and behold, trouble." I turned to the beginning of the chapter: it was the 8th of the Prophet Jeremiah: and having read it to the end, I repeated aloud the verses which had become connected in my memory by their pertinency to the conversation, to which I had been so lately attending; namely, the 11th, 15th, 20th, and 22nd.

"They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. We looked for peace, but no good came: for a time of health, and behold, trouble! The harvest is past, the summer is ended; and we are not saved. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

These impassioned remonstrances, these heart-probing interrogatories of the lamenting Prophet, do indeed anticipate a full, and alas! a too faithful statement of the case, to the public consideration of which we have all of late been so often and so urgently invited, and the inward thought of which our very countenances betray, as by a communion of alarm. In the bold painting of Scripture language, all faces gather blackness, the many at the supposed magnitude of the national embarrassment, the wise at the more certain and far more alarming evil of its moral accom-

paniments. And they not only contain the state of the case, but suggest the most natural scheme and order of treating it. I avail myself, therefore, of the passage as a part of my text, with the less scruple because it will be found to supply of itself the requisite link of connection. The case itself, the plain fact admitted by men of all parties among us, is, as I have just observed, and as you will yourselves have felt at the first perusal of the words, described by anticipation in the intermediate verses; yet with such historic precision, so plain and so specifically as to render all comment needless, all application superfluous. Peace has come without the advantages expected from peace, and, on the contrary, with many of the severest inconveniences usually attributable to war. "We looked for peace, but no good came: for a time of health, and behold trouble. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." The inference therefore contained in the preceding verse is unavoidable. Where war has produced no repentance, and the cessation of war has brought neither concord or tranquillity, we may safely cry aloud with the Prophet: "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace." The whole remaining subject therefore may be comprised in the three questions implied in the last of the verses recited to you; in three questions, and in the answers to the same. First, who are they who have hitherto prescribed for the case, and are still tampering with it? What are their qualifications? What has been their conduct? Second, what is the true seat and source of the complaint—the ultimate causes as well as the immediate occasions? And lastly, what are the appropriate medicines? Who and where are the true physicians?

And first, then, of those who have been ever loud and foremost in their pretensions to a knowledge both of the disease and the remedy. In a preceding part of the same chapter from which I extracted the line prefixed, the Prophet Isaiah enumerates the conditions of a nation's recovery from a state of depression and peril, and among these, one condition which he describes in words that may be without any forced or over-refined interpretation unfolded into an answer to the present question. The vile person, he tells us, must no more be called liberal, nor the churl be said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord; to make empty the soul of the needy: and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the

poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh aright. But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. (Isaiah xxxii. 5, 6, 7, 8.)

Such are the political empirics, mischievous in proportion to their effrontery, and ignorant in proportion to their presumption, the detection and exposure of whose true characters the inspired statesman and patriot represents as indispensable to the re-establishment of the general welfare, while his own portrait of these impostors whom in a former chapter (ix. 15, 16) he calls, "the tail of the nation," and in the following verse, demagogues "that cause the people to err," affords to the intelligent believer of all ages and countries the means of detecting them, and of undeceiving all whose own malignant passions have not rendered them blind and deaf and brutish. For these noisy and calumnious zealots, whom (with an especial reference indeed to the factious leaders of the populace who under this name exercised a tumultuary despotism in Jerusalem, at once a sign and a cause of its approaching downfall) St. John beheld in the Apocalyptic vision as a compound of locust and scorpion, are not of one place or of one season. They are the perennials of history: and though they may disappear for a time, they exist always in the egg, and need only a distempered atmosphere and an accidental ferment to start up into life and activity.

It is worth our while, therefore, or rather it is our duty, to examine with a more attentive eye this representative portrait drawn for us by an infallible master, and to distinguish its component parts, each by itself, so that we may combine without confusing them in our memory; till they blend at length into one physiognomic expression, which, whenever the counterpart is obtruded on our notice in the sphere of our own experience, may be at once recognised, and enable us to convince ourselves of the identity by a comparison of feature with feature.

The passage commences with a fact, which to the inexperienced might well seem strange and improbable: but which, being a truth nevertheless of our own knowledge, is the more striking and characteristic. Worthless persons of little or no estimation for rank, learning, or integrity, not seldom profligates, with whom debauchery has outwrestled rapacity, easy because unprincipled, and generous because dishonest, are suddenly cried up as men of enlarged views and liberal sentiments, our only genuine patriots and philanthropists: and churls, that is, men of sullen tempers and surly demeanour; men tyrannical in their families, oppressive and troublesome to their dependents and neighbours, and hard in

their private dealings between man and man; men who clench with one hand what they have grasped with the other;—these are extolled as public benefactors, the friends, guardians, and advocates of the poor! Here and there, indeed, we may notice an individual of birth and fortune

(For great estates enlarge not narrow minds)

who has been duped into the ranks of incendiaries and mob-sycophants by an insane restlessness, and the wretched ambition of figuring as the triton of the minnows. Or we may find perhaps a professional man of showy accomplishments, but of a vulgar taste and shallow acquirements, who in part from vanity and in part as a means of introduction to practice, will seek notoriety by an eloquence well calculated to set the multitude agape, and excite gratis to overt acts of sedition or treason which he may afterwards be fee'd to defend! These, however, are but exceptions to the general rule. Such as the Prophet has described, such is the sort of men; and in point of historic fact it has been from men of this sort that profaneness is gone forth into all the land. (Jeremiah xxiii. 15.)

In harmony with the general character of these false prophets are the particular qualities assigned to them. First, a passion for vague and violent invective, an habitual and inveterate predilection for the language of hate and rage and contumely, an ungoverned appetite for abuse and defamation! The vile will talk villany.

But the fetid flower will ripen into the poisonous berry, and the fruits of the hand follow the blossoms of the slanderous lips. His heart will work iniquity. That is, he will plan evil, and do his utmost to carry his plans into execution. The guilt exists already; and there wants nothing but power and opportunity to condense it into crime and overt act. He that hateth his brother is a murderer! saith St. John: and of many and various sorts are the brother-haters, in whom this truth may be exemplified. Most appropriately for our purpose, Isaiah has selected the fratricide of sedition, and with the eagle eye and practised touch of an intuitive demonstrator he unfolds the composition of the character, part by part, in the secret history of the agent's wishes, designs and attempts, of his ways, his means, and his ends. The agent himself, the incendiary and his kindling combustibles, had been already sketched by Solomon, with the rapid yet faithful outline of a master in the art: "The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness and the end of his talk mischievous

madness." (Ecclesiastes x. 13.) If in the spirit of Prophecy\* the wise ruler had been present to our own times, and their procedures; if while he sojourned in the valley of vision he had actually heard the very harangues of our reigning demagogues to the convened populace; could he have more faithfully characterized either the speakers or the speeches? Whether in spoken or in printed addresses, whether in periodical journals or in yet cheaper implements of irritation, the ends are the same, the process is the same, and the same is their general line of conduct. On all occasions, but most of all and with a more bustling malignity whenever any public distress inclines the lower classes to turbulence, and renders them more apt to be alienated from the government of their country—in all places and at every opportunity pleading to the poor and ignorant—nowhere and at no time are they found actually pleading for them. Nor is this the worst. They even plead against them. Yes; sycophants to the crowd,

\* Solomon has himself informed us, that beyond wealth and conquest, and as of far greater importance to him, in his arduous office of King and Magistrate, he had sought through knowledge of wisdom to lay hold on folly: that is, by the study of man, to arrive at a grounded knowledge of men, and through a previous insight into the nature and conditions of good to acquire by inference a thorough comprehension of the evil that arises from its deficiency or perversion. And truly in all points of prudence, public and private, we may accommodate to the Royal Preacher his own words (Ecclesiastes ii. 12): *What can the man say that cometh after the King? Even that which hath been said already.*

In a preceding page we have interpreted the fifth trumpet in the Apocalypse, of the Zelotæ during the siege of Jerusalem: to the Romans therefore, and their Oriental allies, we must refer the sounding of the sixth Angel in this sublime and magnificent drama acted in Heaven, before the whole Host of Heaven, the personal friend of the Incarnate God attending as the representative of human nature, and in her behalf looking and listening with fearful awe to the prophetic symbols of her destiny! But had I dared imitate the major part of the Commentators, and followed the fatuous fires of Fancy, that "shrewd sprite" ever busiest when in the service of pre-conceived partialities and antipathies, I might have suffered my judgment to be seduced by the wonderful (apparent) aptness of the symbols (many of them at least), and extended the application of the first eleven verses to the whole chapter, the former as treating of the demagogues exclusively, the latter as including their infatuated followers likewise. For what other images,

concorporated according to the rules of hieroglyphic syntax, could form more appropriate and significant exponents of a seditious and riotous multitude, with the mob-orators, their heads or leaders, than the thousands of pack-horses (*jumenta sarcinaria*) with heads resembling those of a roaring wild beast, with smoke, fire and brimstone (that is, empty, unintelligible, incendiary, calumnious, and offensively foul language) issuing from their mouth? "For their power is in their mouths and in their tails; and they have heads, and by means of them they do hurt."

The authenticity of this canonical book rests on the firmest grounds, both of outward testimony and internal evidence. But it has been most strangely abused and perverted, from the Millennarians of the primitive Church to the religious politicians of our own times. My own conception of the book is, that it narrates in the broad and inclusive form of the ancient Prophets (i.e. in the prophetic power of faith and moral insight irradiated by inspiration) the successive struggles and final triumph of Christianity over the Paganism and Judaism of the then Roman Empire, typified in the fall of Rome, the destruction of the Old and the (symbolical) descent of the New Jerusalem. Nor do I think its interpretation even in detail attended with any insuperable difficulties.

It was once my intention to have translated the Apocalypse into verse, as a poem, holding a mid place between the epic narrative and the choral drama: and to have annexed a Commentary in Prose—an intention long and fondly cherished, but during many years deferred from an unfeigned sense of my deficiency; and now there remains only the hope and the wish, or rather a feeling between both!



enemies of the individuals, and well-wishers only to the continuance of their miseries, they plead against the poor and afflicted, under the weak and wicked pretence that we are to do nothing of what we can, because we cannot do all that we would wish. Or if this sophistry of sloth (*sophisma pigri*) should fail to check the bounty of the rich, there is still the sophistry of slander in reserve to chill the gratitude of the poor. If they cannot dissuade the liberal from devising liberal things, they will at least blacken the motives of his beneficence. If they cannot close the hand of the giver, they will at least embitter the gift in the mouth of the receivers. Is it not as if they had said within their hearts, the sacrifice of charity has been offered indeed in despite of us; "but with bitter herbs shall it be eaten." (Exod. xii. 8.) Imagined wrongs shall make it distasteful. We will infuse vindictive and discontented fancies into minds already irritable and suspicious from distress: till the fever of the heart shall coat the tongue with gall and spread wormwood on the palate.

However angrily our demagogues may disclaim all intentions of this kind, such has been their procedure, and it is susceptible of no other interpretation. We all know that the shares must be scanty where the dividend bears no proportion to the number of the claimants. Yet He who satisfied the multitude in the wilderness with a few loaves and fishes, is still present to His Church. Small as the portions are, if they are both given and taken in the spirit of His commands, a blessing will go with each; and the handful of meal shall not fail, until the day when the Lord bringeth back plenty on the land. But no blessing can enter where envy and hatred are already in possession; and small good will the poor man have of the food prepared for him by his more favoured brother, if he have been previously taught to regard it as a mess of pottage given to defraud him of his birth-right.

If then to promise medicine and to administer poison; if to flatter in order to deprave; if to affect love to all and show pity to none; if to exaggerate and misderive the distress of the labouring classes in order to make them turbulent, and to discourage every plan for their relief in order to keep them so; if to skulk from private infamy in the mask of public spirit, and make the flaming patriot privilege the gamester, swindler, or adulterer; if to seek amnesty for a continued violation of the laws of God by an equal pertinacity in outraging the laws of the land;—if these characterise the hypocrite, we need not look far back or far

round for faces wherein to recognise the third striking feature of this prophetic portrait! When, therefore, the verifying facts press upon us in real life; when we hear persons, the tyranny of whose will is the only law in their families, denouncing all law as tyranny in public—persons, whose hatred of power in others is in exact proportion to their love of it for themselves; when we behold men of sunk and irretrievable characters, to whom no man would entrust his wife, his sister, or his purse, having the effrontery to propose that we should entrust to them our religion and our country; when we meet with patriots, who aim at an enlargement of the rights and liberties of the people by inflaming the populace to acts of madness that necessitate fetters—pretended heralds of freedom and actual pioneers of military despotism;—we will call to mind the words of the Prophet Isaiah, and say to ourselves, this is no new thing under the sun! We have heard it with our own ears, and it was declared to our fathers, and in the old time before them, that one of the main characteristics of demagogues in all ages is, to practise hypocrisy.

Such, I assert, has been the general line of conduct pursued by the political empirics of the day: and your own recent experience will attest the truth of the assertion. It was affirmed likewise at the same time, that as the conduct, such was the process: and I will seek no other support of this charge, I need no better test both of the men and their works, than the plain question: Is there one good feeling, to which they do—is there a single bad passion, to which they do not—appeal? If they are the enemies of liberty in general, inasmuch as they tend to make it appear incompatible with public quiet and personal safety, still more emphatically are they the enemies of the liberty of the PRESS in particular; and therein of all the truths, human and divine, which a free press is the most efficient and only commensurate means of protecting, extending, and perpetuating. The strongest, indeed the only plausible, arguments against the education of the lower classes, are derived from the writings of these incendiaries; and if for our neglect of the light that hath been vouchsafed to us beyond measure, the land should be visited with a spiritual dearth, it will have been in no small degree occasioned by the erroneous and wicked principles which it is the trade of these men to propagate. Well, therefore, has the Prophet made it the fourth mark of these misleaders of the multitude, not alone to utter error, but to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry! Alas! it is a hard and a mournful thing, that the press should be constrained to call out for the harsh curb of the law against the

press! for how shall the law predistinguish the ominous screech owl from the sacred notes of augury, from the auspicious and friendly birds of warning? And yet will we avoid this seeming injustice, we throw down all fence and bulwark of public decency and public opinion. Already has political calumny joined hands with private slander, and every principle, every feeling, that binds the citizen to his country, the spirit to its Creator, is in danger of being undermined; not by reasoning, for from that there is no danger, but by the mere habit of hearing them reviled and scoffed at with impunity. Were we to contemplate the evils of a rank and unweeded press only in its effects on the manners of a people, and on the general tone of thought and conversation, the greater love we bore to literature, and to all the means and instruments of human improvement, the more anxiously should we wish for some Ithuriel spear that might remove from the ear of the ignorant and half-learned, and expose in their own fiendish shape those reptiles which, inspiring venom and forging illusions as they list,

" . . . . . thence raise,  
At least distemper'd discontented thoughts,  
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires."

PARADISE LOST.

I feel, my friends, that even the strong and painful interest which the peculiar state of the times, and almost the occurrences of the hour, create, can scarcely counterbalance the wearisome aversion inspired by the deformity and palpableness of the subject itself. As the plan originates in the malignant restlessness of desperate ambition or desperate circumstances, so are its means and engines a drag-net of fraud and delusion. The instruments also of the churi are evil; he deviseth wicked devices with lying words. He employs a compound poison, of which the following are the main ingredients, the proportions varying as the case requires or the wit of the poisoner suggests. It will be enough rapidly to name and number the components, as in a catalogue. 1. Bold, warm, and earnest assertions, it matters not whether supported by facts or no, nay, though they should involve absurdities, and demonstrable impossibilities: *ex. gr.* that the amount of the sinecure places given by the executive power would suffice to remove all distress from the land. He is a bungler in the trade, and has been an indocile scholar of his dark master, the father of lies, who cannot make an assertion pass for a fact with an ignorant multitude. The natural generosity of the human heart, which makes it an effort to doubt; the con-

fidence which apparent courage inspires; and the contagion of animal enthusiasm, will ensure the belief. Even in large assemblies of men highly educated, it is too often sufficient to place impressive images in juxta-position: and the constitutive forms of the mind itself aided by the power of habit will supply the rest. For we all think by causal connections. 2. Startling particular facts, which, dissevered from their context, enable a man to convey falsehood while he says truth. 3. Arguments built on passing events, and deriving an undue importance from the feelings of the moment. The mere appeal, however, to the auditors whether the arguments are not such that none but an idiot or an hireling could resist, is an effective substitute for any argument at all. For mobs have no memories. They are in nearly the same state as that of an individual when he makes (what is termed) a bull. The passions, like a fused metal, fill up the wide interstices of thought, and supply the defective links: and thus incompatible assertions are harmonized by the sensation, without the sense, of connection. 4. The display of defects without the accompanying advantages, or *vice versâ*. 5. Concealment of the general and ultimate result behind the scenery of local and particular consequences. 6. Statement of positions that are true only under particular conditions, to men whose ignorance or fury make them forget that these conditions are not present, or lead them to take for granted that they are. 7. Chains of questions, especially of such questions as the persons best authorized to propose are ever the slowest in proposing; and objections intelligible of themselves, the answers to which require the comprehension of a system. 8. Vague and commonplace satire, stale as the wine in which flies were drowned last summer, seasoned by the sly tale and important anecdote of but yesterday, that came within the speaker's own knowledge! 9. Transitions from the audacious charge, not seldom of as signal impudence "as any thing was ever carted for," to the lie pregnant and interpretative: the former to prove the orator's courage, and that he is neither to be bought or frightened; the latter to flatter the sagacity of the audience:

. . . . . δῆλός ἐστιν αὐτόθεν  
 Ἐν πανουργίᾳ τε καὶ θράσει καὶ κοβαλικεύμασιν.

10. Jerks of style, from the lunatic trope, *ῥήμαθ' ἵπποβάμονα, πολλὰς τε ἀλινδήθρας ἐπῶν*, to the buffoonery and "red-lattice phrases" of the *canagliâ*, *Σκῶρ συσκεδῶν βόρβορον τε πόλυν καὶ κακίας καὶ συκοφαντίας*; the one in ostentation of superior rank and acquirements (for where envy does not interfere, man loves to

look up); the other in pledge of heartiness and good fellowship. 11. Lastly, and throughout all, to leave a general impression of something striking, something that is to come of it, and to rely on the indolence of men's understandings and the activity of their passions for their resting in this state, as the brood-warmth fittest to hatch whatever serpent's egg opportunity may enable the deceiver to place under it. Let but mysterious expressions \* be aided by significant looks and tones, and you may cajole a hot and ignorant audience to believe any thing by saying nothing, and finally to act on the lie which they themselves have been drawn in to make. This is the Pharmacopœia of political empirics, here and everywhere, now and at all times! These are the drugs administered, and the tricks played off by the mountebanks and zanies of patriotism; drugs that will continue to poison as long as irreligion secures a pre-disposition to their influence; and artifices that, like stratagems in war, are nevertheless successful for having succeeded a hundred times before. "They bend their tongues as a bow! they shoot out deceits as arrows: they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts: they cause the people to err by their dreams and their lightness: they make the people vain, they feed them with worm-wood, they give them the water of gall for drink: and the people love to have it so. And what is the end thereof?" (Jerem. *passim*.)

The Prophet answers for me in the concluding words of the description—To destroy the poor, even when the needy speaketh aright—that is, to impel them to acts that must end in their ruin by inflammatory falsehoods and by working on their passions till they lead them to reject the prior convictions of their own sober and unsophisticated understandings. As in all the preceding features so in this, with which the prophetic portrait is completed, our own experience supplies both proof and example. The ultimate causes of the present distress and stagnation are, in the writer's opinion, complex and deeply seated; but the immediate occasion is too obvious to be overlooked but by eyes at once red and dim through the intoxication of factious prejudice, that maddening spirit which pre-eminently deserves the title of *vinum dæmonum* applied by an ancient father of the Church to a far more innocent phrenzy. It is demonstrable that taxes, the pro-

\* Vide *North's Examen*, p. 20; and *The Knights of Aristophanes*. A version of this comedy, abridged and modernised, would be a most seasonable present to the public. The words quoted above from this play and *The Frogs*, may be rendered freely in the order in which they occur: thus—

1. Thence he is illustrious, as a man of all waters, a bold fellow, and one who knows how to tickle the populace.

2. Phrases on horseback, curvetting and careering words.

3. Scattering filth and dirt, malice and sycophantic tales.

duct of which is circulated in the country from which they are raised, can never injure a country directly by the mere amount; but either from the time or circumstances under which they are raised, or from the injudicious mode in which they are levied, or from the improper objects to which they are applied. The sun may draw up the moisture from the river, the morass, and the ocean, to be given back in genial showers to the garden, the pasture, and the cornfield; but it may likewise force upward the moisture from the fields of industry to drop it on the stagnant pool, the saturated swamp, or the unprofitable sand-waste. The corruptions of a system can be duly appreciated by those only who have contemplated the system in that ideal state of perfection exhibited by the reason: the nearest possible approximation to which under existing circumstances it is the business of the prudential understanding to realise. Those, on the other hand, who commence the examination of a system by identifying it with its abuses or imperfections, degrade their understanding into the pander of their passions, and are sure to prescribe remedies more dangerous than the disease. Alas! there are so many real evils, so many just causes of complaint in the constitutions and administration of all governments, our own not excepted, that it becomes the imperious duty of the true patriot to prevent, as much as in him lies, the feelings and efforts of his fellow-countrymen from losing themselves on a wrong scent.

If then we are to master the ideal of a beneficent and judicious system of finance as the preliminary to all profitable insight into the defects of any particular system in actual existence, we could not perhaps find an apter illustration than the gardens of southern Europe would supply. The tanks or reservoirs would represent the capital of a nation: while the hundred rills hourly varying their channels and directions, under the gardener's spade, would give a pleasing image of the dispersion of that capital through the whole population by the joint effect of taxation and trade. For taxation itself is a part of commerce, and the government may be fairly considered as a great manufacturing-house, carrying on in different places, by means of its partners and overseers, the trades of the ship-builder, the clothier, the iron-founder, &c. &c. As long as a balance is preserved between the receipts and the returns of government in their amount, quickness, and degree of dispersion, as long as the due proportion obtains in the sums levied to the mass in productive circulation, so long does the wealth and circumstantial prosperity of the nation (its wealth, I say, not its real welfare; its outward pros-

perity, but not necessarily its happiness) remain unaffected, or rather they will appear to increase in consequence of the additional stimulus given to the circulation itself by the reproductive action of all large capitals, and through the check which taxation, in its own nature, gives to the indolence of the wealthy in its continual transfer of property to the industrious and enterprising. If different periods be taken, and if the comparative weight of the taxes at each be calculated, as it ought to be, not by the sum levied on each individual, but by the sum left in his possession, the settlement of the account will be in favour of the national wealth, to the amount of all the additional productive labour sustained or excited by the taxes during the intervals between their efflux and their re-absorption.

But, on the other hand, in a direct ratio to this increase will be the distress produced by the disturbance of this balance, by the loss of this proportion; and the operation of the distress will be at least equal to the total amount of the difference between the taxes still levied, and the quantum of aid withdrawn from individuals by the abandonment of others, and of that which the taxes that still remain have ceased to give by the altered mode of their re-dispersion. But to this we must add the number of persons raised and reared in consequence of the demand created by the preceding state of things, and now discharged from their occupations: whether the latter belong exclusively to the executive power, as that of soldiers, &c., or from those in which the labourers for the nation in general are already sufficiently numerous. Both these classes are thrown back on the public, and sent to a table where every seat is pre-occupied. The employment lessens as the number of men to be employed is increased; and not merely in the same, but from additional causes and from the indirect consequences of those already stated, in a far greater ratio. For it may easily happen, that the very same change, which had produced this depression at home, may from equivalent causes have embarrassed the countries in commercial connection with us. At one and the same time the great customer at home wants less, and our customers abroad are able to buy less. The conjoint action of these circumstances will furnish, for a mind capable of combining them, a sufficient solution of the melancholy fact. They cannot but occasion much distress, much obstruction, and these again in their reaction are sure to be more than doubled by the still greater and universal alarm, and by the consequent check of confidence and enterprise, which they never fail to produce.

Now it is a notorious fact, that these causes did all exist to a very extraordinary degree, and that they all worked with united strength, in the late sudden transition from war to peace. It was one among the many anomalies of the late war, that it acted, after a few years, as a universal stimulant. We almost monopolised the commerce of the world. The high wages of our artisans and the high prices of agricultural produce intercirculated. Leases of no unusual length not seldom enabled the provident and thrifty farmer to purchase the estate he had rented. Everywhere might be seen roads, railways, docks, canals, made, making, and projected; villages swelling into towns, while the metropolis surrounded itself, and became, as it were, set with new cities. Finally, in spite of all the waste and havoc of a twenty years' war, the population of the empire was increased by more than two millions! The efforts and war-expenditure of the nation, and the yearly revenue, were augmented in the same proportion: and to all this we must add a fact of the utmost importance in the present question, that the war did not, as was usually the case in former wars, die away into a long-expected peace, by gradual exhaustion and weariness on both sides, but plunged to its conclusion by a concentration, we might almost say by a spasm of energy, and consequently by an anticipation of our resources. We conquered by compelling reversionary power into alliance with our existing and natural strength. The first intoxication of triumph having passed over, this, our "agony of glory," was succeeded, of course, by a general stiffness and relaxation. The antagonist passions came into play; financial solicitude was blended with constitutional and political jealousies, and both, alas! were exacerbated by personal imprudences, the chief injury of which consisted in their own tendency to disgust and alienate the public feeling. And with all this, the financial errors and prejudices even of the more educated classes, in short, the general want or imperfection of clear views and a scientific insight into the true effects and influences of taxation, and the mode of its operation, became now a real misfortune, and opened an additional source of temporary embarrassment. Retrenchment could no longer proceed by cautious and calculated steps; but was compelled to hurry forward, like one who crossing the sands at too late an hour finds himself threatened by the inrush of the tide. Nevertheless, it was a truth susceptible of little less than mathematical demonstration, that the more, and the more suddenly, the revenue was diminished by the abandonment of the war-taxes, the greater would be the disturbance of the



balance:\* so that the agriculturist, the manufacturer, or the tradesman (all in short but annuitants and fixed stipendiaries), who during the war having paid as five and fifteen left behind, would shortly have less than ten after having paid but two and a half.

But there is yet another circumstance, which we dare not pass by unnoticed. In the best of times—or what the world calls such—the spirit of commerce will occasion great fluctuations, some falling while others rise, and therefore in all times there will be a large sum of individual distress. Trades likewise have their seasons, and at all times there is a very considerable number of artificers who are not employed on the average more than seven or eight months in the year: and the distress from this cause is great or small in proportion to the greater or less degree of dissipation and improvidence prevailing among them. But besides this, that artificial life and vigour of trade and agriculture which was produced or occasioned by the direct or indirect influences of the late war, proved by no means innoxious in its effects. Habit and the familiarity with outward advantages, which takes off their dazzle; sense of character; and above all, the counterpoise of intellectual pursuits and resources; are all necessary preventives and antidotes to the dangerous properties of wealth and power with the great majority of mankind. It is a painful subject: and I leave to your own experience and recollection the assemblage of folly, presumption, and extravagance, that followed in the procession of our late unprecedented prosperity,

\* The disturbance of this balance may be illustrated thus:—Suppose a great capitalist to have founded, in a large market-town, a factory that gradually increasing employed at length from five to six hundred workmen; and that he had likewise a second factory at a distance from the former (in the Isle of Man, for instance) employing half that number, all of the latter having been drafted from and still belonging to the first parish. After some years we may further suppose, that a large proportion of the housekeepers and tradespeople might have a running account with the capitalist, many with him, as being their landlord, and still more for their stock. The workmen would in like manner be for the greater part on the books of the tradesfolks. As long as this state of things continued, all would go on well—nay, the town would be more prosperous with every increase of the factory. The balance is preserved. The circulations counterpoise each other, or rather they are neutralized by influence. But some sudden event leads or compels the capitalist to put down both factories at once and with little or no warning; and to call in all the monies owing to

him, and which by law had the preference to all other debts.—What would be the consequence? The workmen are no longer employed, and cannot at once pay up their arrears to the tradesmen; and though the capitalist should furnish the latter with goods at half price, and make the same abatement in their rent, these deductions would afford little present relief: while in the meantime the discharged workmen from the distant factory would fall back on the parish, and increase the general distress. The balance is disturbed.—Put the country at large for the parishioners, and the government in all departments of expenditure for the capitalist and his factories: and nearly such is the situation in which we are placed by the transition from the late war to the present peace. But the difference is this. The town may never recover its temporary prosperity, and the capitalist may spend his remaining fortune in another county; but a nation, of which the government is an organic part with perfect interdependence of interests, can never remain in a state of depression thus produced, but by its own fault: that is, from moral causes.

the blind practices and blinding passions of speculation in the commercial world, with the shoal of ostentatious fooleries and sensual vices which the sudden influx of wealth let in on our farmers and yeomanry. Now though the whole mass of calamity consequent on these aberrations from prudence should in all fairness be attributed to the sufferer's own conduct; yet when there supervenes some one common cause or occasion of distress which pressing hard on many furnishes a pretext to all, this too will pass muster among its actual effects, and assume the semblance and dignity of national calamity. Each unfortunate individual shares during the hard times in the immunities of a privileged order, as the most tottering and ruinous houses equally with those in best repair are included in the same brief after an extensive fire. The change of the moon will not produce a change of weather, except in places where the atmosphere has from local and particular causes been predisposed to its influence. But the former is one, placed aloft and conspicuous to all men; the latter are many and intricate, and known to few. Of course it is the moon that must bear the entire blame of wet summers and scanty crops. All these, however, whether they are distresses common to all times alike, or though occasioned by the general revolution and stagnation, yet really caused by personal improvidence or misconduct, combine with its peculiar and inevitable effects in making the cup overflow. The latter class especially, as being in such cases always the most clamorous sufferers, increase the evil by swelling the alarm.

The principal part of the preceding explication, the main causes of the present exigencies, are so obvious, and lie so open to the common sense of mankind, that the labouring classes saw the connection of the change in the times with the suddenness of the peace as clearly as their superiors, and, being less heated with speculation, were in the first instance less surprised at the results. To a public event of universal concern there will often be more attributed than belongs to it; but never in the natural course of human feelings will there be less. That the depression began with the peace would have been of itself a sufficient proof with the many, that it arose from the peace. But this opinion suited ill with the purposes of sedition. The truth, that could not be precluded, must be removed; and "when the needy speaketh aright" the more urgent occasion is there for the "wicked device" and the "lying words." Where distress is felt, tales of wrong and oppression are readily believed, to the sufferer's own disquiet. Rage and revenge make the cheek pale and the hand tremble

worse than even want itself: and the cup of sorrow overflows by being held unsteadily. On the other hand, nothing calms the mind in the hour of bitterness so efficaciously as the conviction that it was not within the means of those above us, or around us, to have prevented it. An influence, mightier than fascination, dwells in the stern eye of necessity, when it is fixed steadily on a man: for together with the power of resistance, it takes away its agitations likewise. This is one mercy that always accompanies the visitations of the Almighty when they are received as such. If therefore the sufferings of the lower classes are to supply air and fuel to their passions, and are to be perverted into instruments of mischief, they must be attributed to causes that can be represented as removeable; either to individuals who had been previously rendered unpopular, or to whole classes of men, according as the immediate object of their seducers may require. What though nothing should be more remote from the true cause? What though the invidious charge should be not only without proof, but in the face of strong proof to the contrary? What though the pretended remedy should have no possible end but that of exasperating the disease? All will be of little or no avail if these truths have not been administered beforehand. When the wrath is gone forth, the plague is already begun (Numbers xvi. 46). Wrath is cruel, and where is there a deafness like that of an outrageous multitude? For as the matter of the fire is, so it burneth. Let the demagogue but succeed in maddening the crowd, he may bid defiance to demonstration, and direct the madness against whom it pleaseth him. A slanderous tongue has disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation; strong cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the houses of great men. (Ecclesiasticus xxviii. 14.)

We see in every promiscuous public meeting the effect produced by the bold assertion that the present hardships of all classes are owing to the number and amount of pensions and sinecures. Yet from the unprecedented zeal and activity in the education \* of the

\* With all due humility we contended that the war in question had likewise its golden side. The anomalous occasions and stupendous events of the contest had roused us, like the blast of a trumpet from the clouds; and as many as were capable of thinking were roused to thought. It had forced on the higher and middle classes—say rather on the people at large, as distinguished from the mere populace—the home truth, that national honesty and individual safety, private morals and public security, mutually grounded each other, that they were twined

at the very root, and could not grow or thrive but in intertwine: and we of Great Britain had acquired this instruction without the stupefying influences of terror or actual calamity. Yet that it had operated practically, and in a scale proportional to the magnitude of the occasion, the late and present condition of manners and intellect among the young men at Oxford and Cambridge, the manly sobriety of demeanour, the submission to the routine of study in almost all, and the zeal in the pursuit of knowledge and academic distinction in a large and increasing number,

poor, of the thousands that are inflamed by, and therefore give credit to, these statements, there are few without a child at home who could prove their impossibility by the first and simplest rules of arithmetic; there is not one perhaps who, taken by himself and in a cooler mood, would stand out against the simple question, whether it was not folly to suppose that the lowness of his wages or his want of employment could be occasioned by the circumstance that a sum (the whole of which, as far as it is raised by taxation, cannot take a yearly penny from him) was dispersed and returned into the general circulation by annuitants of the treasury instead of annuitants of the bank, by John instead of Peter, however blameable the regulation might be in other respects? What then? the hypothesis allows of a continual reference to persons, and to all the uneasy and malignant passions which personalities are of all means the best fitted to awaken. The grief itself, however grinding it may be, is of no avail to this end; it must first be converted into a grievance. Were the audience composed chiefly of the lower farmers and the peasantry, the same circumstance would, for the same reason, have been attributed wholly to the clergy and the system of tithes; as if the corn would be more plentiful if the farmers paid their whole rent to one man, instead of paying nine parts to the landlords and the tenth to the tithe-owners! But let the meeting be composed of the manufacturing poor, and then it is the machinery of their employers that is devoted to destruction: though it would not exceed the truth if I affirmed that to the use and perfection of this very machinery the majority of the poor deluded destroyers owe their very existence, owe to it that they ever beheld the light of heaven!

afford a cheering testimony to such as were familiar with the state of the two Universities forty, or even thirty, years ago, with the moral contrast which they presented at the close of the last, and during the former half of the present reign; while a proof of still greater power, and open to the observation of all men, is supplied by the predominant anxiety concerning the education and principles of their children in all the respectable classes of the community, and the unexampled sale, in consequence, of the very numerous large and small volumes composed or compiled for the use of parents. Nor here did the salutary influence stop. We had been compelled to know and feel that the times in which we had to act or suffer were the saturnalia of revolution, and fearful evidence had been given us at the cost of our unfortunate neighbours, that a vicious and ignorant population was a magazine of combustibles left roofless, while madmen and

incendiaries were letting off their new invented blue lights and fire-rockets in every direction. The wish sprang up and spread throughout England that every Englishman should be able to read his Bible, and have a Bible of his own to read. The general wish organized itself into act and plan: a discovery, the living educt of one great man's genius and benevolence, rendered the execution practicable and even easy; and the god-like idea began and is proceeding to realise itself with a rapidity yet stedfastness which nothing could make possible or credible but such a conviction effected by an experience so strange and awful, and acting on that volunteer spirit, that instinct of fervid yet orderly co-operation, which most of our honourable characteristics distinguishes, secures, enriches, strengthens, and elevates the people of Great Britain. [*From an Essay by the Author, published in the Courier, July, 1816.*]

Even so it is with the capitalists and storekeepers, who, by spreading the dearness of provisions over a larger space and time, prevent scarcity from becoming real famine, the frightful lot at certain and not distant intervals of our less commercial forefathers. These men, by the mere instinct of self-interest, are not alone birds of warning that prevent waste, but, as the raven of Elijah, they bring supplies from afar. But let the incendiary spirit have rendered them birds of ill omen, and it is well if the deluded malcontents can be restrained from levelling at them missiles more alarming than the curse of the unwise that alighteth not. "There be three things (says the wise son of Sirach) that mine heart feareth, the slander of a city, the gathering together of an unruly multitude, and a false accusation: all these are worse than death." But all these are the arena, and the chosen weapons of demagogues. Wretches! they would without remorse detract the hope that is the subliming and expanding warmth of public credit, destroy the public credit that is the vital air of national industry, convert obstruction into stagnation, and make grass grow in the exchange and the market-place; if so they might but goad ignorance into riot, and fanaticism into rebellion! They would snatch the last morsel from the poor man's lips to make him curse the government in his heart—alas! to fall at length either ignominiously beneath the strength of the outraged law, or (if God in His anger, and for the punishment of general depravity, should require a severer and more extensive retribution) to perish still more lamentably among the victims of its weakness.

Thus, then, I have answered at large to the first of the three questions proposed as the heads and divisions of this address. I am well aware that our demagogues are not the only empirics who have tampered with the case. But I felt unwilling to put the mistakes of sciolism, or even those of vanity and self-interest, in the same section with crime and guilt. What is omitted here will find its place elsewhere, the more readily that, having been tempted by the foulness of the ways to turn for a short space out of my direct path, I have encroached already on the second question; that, namely, which respects the ultimate causes and immediate occasions of the complaint.

The latter part of this problem I appear to myself to have solved fully and satisfactorily. To those who deem any further or deeper research superfluous, I must content myself with observing that I have never heard it denied that there is more than a sufficiency of food in existence. I have, at least, met with no proof that there is or has been any scarcity either in the materials

of all necessary comforts, or any lack of strength, skill, and industry to prepare them. If we saw a man in health pining at a full table because there was not "the savoury meat there which he loved" and had expected, the wanton delay or negligence of the messenger would be a complete answer to our inquiries after the occasion of this sullenness or inappetence; but the cause of it we should be tempted to seek in the man's own undisciplined temper, or habits of self-indulgence. So far from agreeing therefore with those who find the causes in the occasions, I think the half of the question already solved of very unequal importance with that which yet remains for solution.

The immediate occasions of the existing distress may be correctly given with no greater difficulty than would attend any other series of known historic facts; but toward the discovery of its true seat and sources I can but offer a humble contribution. They appear to me, however, resolvable into the overbalance\* of the commercial spirit in consequence of the absence or weakness of the counter-weights; this overbalance considered as displaying itself, 1, in the commercial world itself; 2, in the agricultural; 3, in the government; and, 4, in the combined influence of all three on the more numerous and labouring classes.

Of the natural counter-forces to the impetus of trade, the first that presents itself to my mind is the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry, compared with our present self-complacent triumph over these supposed prejudices. Not that titles and the rights of precedence are pursued by us with less eagerness than by our forefathers. The contrary is the case; and for this very cause, because they inspire less reverence. In the old times they were valued by the possessors and revered by the people as distinctions of nature, which the crown itself could only ornament, but not give. Like the stars in heaven, their influence was wider and more general, because for the mass of mankind there was no hope of reaching, and therefore no desire to appropriate them. That many evils as well as advantages accompanied this state of things I am well aware: and likewise that many of the latter have be-

\* I entreat attention to the word *overbalance*. My opinions would be greatly misinterpreted if I were supposed to think hostilely of the spirit of commerce to which I attribute the largest proportion of our actual freedom (i.e. as Englishmen, and not merely as landowners) and at least as large a share of our virtues as of our vices. Still more anxiously would I guard against the suspicion of a design to inculpate any number or class of individuals. It is not in the power of a

minister or of a cabinet to say to the current of national tendency, *stay here! or flow there!* The excess can only be remedied by the slow progress of intellect, the influences of religion, and irresistible events guided by Providence. In the points even, which I have presumed to blame, by the word *government* I intend all the directors of political power, that is, the great estates of the realm, temporal and spiritual, and not only the Parliament, but all the elements of Parliament.

come incompatible with far more important blessings. It would, therefore, be sickly affectation to suspend the thankfulness due for our immunity from the one, in an idle regret for the loss of the other. But however true this may be, and whether the good or the evil preponderated, still it acted as a counterpoise to the grosser superstition for wealth. Of the efficiency of this counter-influence we can offer negative proof only: and for this we need only look back on the deplorable state of Holland in respect of patriotism and public spirit at and before the commencement of the French Revolution.

The limits and proportions of this address allow little more than a bare reference to this point. The same restraint I must impose on myself in the following. For under this head I include the general neglect of all the austerer studies; the long and ominous eclipse of philosophy; the usurpation of that venerable name by physical and psychological empiricism; and the non-existence of a learned and philosophic public, which is perhaps the only innoxious form of an *imperium in imperio*, but at the same time the only form which is not directly or indirectly encouraged. So great a risk do I incur of malignant interpretation, and the assertion itself is so likely to appear paradoxical even to men of candid minds, that I should have passed over this point, most important as I know it to be, but that it will be found stated more at large, with all its proofs, in a work on the point of publication. The fact is simply this. We have—lovers shall I entitle them?—or must I not rather hazard the introduction of their own phrases, and say, amateurs or dilettanti, as musicians, botanists, florists, mineralogists, and antiquarians? Nor is it denied that these are ingenuous pursuits, and such as become men of rank and fortune. Neither in these nor in any other points do I complain of any excess in the pursuits themselves; but of that which arises from the deficiency of the counterpoise. The effect is the same. Every work which can be made use of either to immediate profit or immediate pleasure; every work which falls in with the desire of acquiring wealth suddenly, or which can gratify the senses, or pamper the still more degrading appetite for scandal and personal defamation, is sure of an appropriate circulation. But neither philosophy nor theology, in the strictest sense of the words, can be said to have even a public existence among us. I feel assured that if Plato himself were to return and renew his sublime lucubrations in the metropolis of Great Britain, a handicraftsman from a laboratory, who had just succeeded in disoxydating an earth, would be thought far the

more respectable, nay, the more illustrious, person of the two. Nor will it be the least drawback from his honours that he had never even asked himself what law of universal being nature uttered in this phenomenon: while the character of a visionary would be the sole remuneration of the man who, from the insight into that law, had previously demonstrated the necessity of the fact. As to that which passes with us under the name of metaphysics, philosophic elements, and the like, I refer every man of reflection to the contrast between the present times and those shortly after the restoration of ancient literature. In the latter we find the greatest men of the age, statesmen, warriors, monarchs, architects, in closest intercourse with philosophy. I need only mention the names of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Pico, Count Mirandola, Ficinus, and Politian; the abstruse subjects of their discussion, and the importance attached to them, as the requisite qualifications of men placed by Providence as guides and governors of their fellow-creatures. If this be undeniable, equally notorious is it that at present the more effective a man's talents are, and the more likely he is to be useful and distinguished in the highest situations of public life, the earlier does he show his aversion to the metaphysics and the books of metaphysical speculation which are placed before him: though they come with the recommendation of being so many triumphs of modern good sense over the schools of ancient philosophy. Dante, Petrarch, Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, Algernon Sidney, Milton, and Barrow, were Platonists. But all the men of genius with whom it has been my fortune to converse, either profess to know nothing of the present systems or to despise them. It would be equally unjust and irrational to seek the solution of this difference in the men; and if not, it can be found only in the philosophic systems themselves. And so in truth it is. The living of former ages communed gladly with a life-breathing philosophy. The living of the present age wisely leave the dead to take care of the dead.

But whatever the causes may be, the result is before our eyes. An excess in our attachment to temporal and personal objects can be counteracted only by a pre-occupation of the intellect and the affections with permanent, universal, and eternal truths. Let no man enter, said Plato, who has not previously disciplined his mind by geometry. He considered this science as the first purification of the soul, by abstracting the attention from the accidents of the senses. We too teach geometry; but that there may be no danger of the pupil's becoming too abstract in his conceptions, it has been not only proposed, but the proposal has been adopted.



that it should be taught by wooden diagrams! It pains me to remember with what applause a work, that placed the inductions of modern chemistry in the same rank with the demonstrations of mathematical science, was received even in a mathematical university. I must not permit myself to say more on this subject, desirous as I am of showing the importance of a philosophic class, and of evincing that it is of vital utility, and even an essential element in the composition of a civilized community. It must suffice that it has been explained in what respect the pursuit of truth for its own sake, and the reverence yielded to its professors, has a tendency to calm or counteract the pursuit of wealth; and that therefore a counter-force is wanting wherever philosophy is degraded in the estimation of society. What are you (a philosopher was once asked) in consequence of your admiration of these abstruse speculations? He answered: What I am, it does not become me to say; but what thousands are who despise them, and even pride themselves on their ignorance, I see—and tremble!

There is a third influence, alternately our spur and our curb, without which all the pursuits and desires of man must either exceed or fall short of their just measure. Need I add that I mean the influence of religion? I speak of that sincere, that entire interest in the undivided faith of Christ which demands the first-fruits of the whole man, his affections no less than his outward acts, his understanding equally with his feelings. For be assured, never yet did there exist a full faith in the divine Word (by whom not immortality alone, but light and immortality, were brought into the world) which did not expand the intellect while it purified the heart; which did not multiply the aims and objects of the mind, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions. If acquiescence without insight; if warmth without light; if an immunity from doubt given and guaranteed by a resolute ignorance; if the habit of taking for granted the words of a catechism, remembered or forgotten; if a sensation of positiveness substituted, I will not say for certainty, but for that calm assurance the very means and conditions of which it supersedes; if a belief that seeks the darkness, and yet strikes no root, immovable as the limpet from its rock, and like the limpet fixed there by mere force of adhesion;—if these suffice to make us Christians, in what intelligible sense could our Lord have announced it as the height and consummation of the signs and miracles which attested His divinity that the Gospel was preached to the poor? In what sense could the Apostle affirm that believers have received, not indeed the wisdom of this world that comes to

nought, but the wisdom of God, that we might know and comprehend the things that are freely given to us of God? or that every Christian, in proportion as he is indeed a Christian, has received the Spirit that searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God himself?—on what grounds could the Apostle denounce even the sincerest fervour of spirit as defective, where it does not bring forth fruits in the understanding? \* Or again, if to believe were enough, why are we commanded by another Apostle that, “besides this, giving all diligence we should add to our faith manly energy, and to manly energy knowledge”? Is it not especially significant that, in the divine economy as revealed to us in the New Testament, the peculiar office of Redemption is attributed to the Word, that is, to the intelligential wisdom which from all eternity is with God, and is God? that in *Him* is life, and the life is the *light* of men?

In the present day we hear much, and from men of various creeds, of the plainness and simplicity of the Christian religion: and a strange abuse has been made of these words, often indeed with no ill intention, but still oftener by men who would fain transform the necessity of believing in Christ into a recommendation to believe *Him*. The advocates of the latter scheme grew out of a sect that were called Socinians, but having succeeded in disbelieving far beyond the last footmarks of the Socini, have chosen to designate themselves by the name of Unitarians. But this is a word which, in its proper sense, can belong only to their antagonists: for unity or unition, and indistinguishable unicity or oneness, are incompatible terms: while, in the exclusive sense in which they mean the name to be understood, it is a presumptuous boast, and an uncharitable calumny. Their true designation, which simply expresses a fact admitted on all sides, would be that of Psilanthropists,† or assertors of the mere humanity of Christ. It is the interest of those men to speak of the Christian religion as comprised in a few plain doctrines, and containing nothing not intelligible, at the first hearing, to men of the narrowest capacities. Well, then (it might be replied), we are disposed to place a full reliance on the veracity of the great Founder of the Christian religion, and likewise—which is more than you yourselves

\* Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

† New things justify new terms. *Novis in rebus licet nova nobis verba confingere.*—We never speak of the unity of attraction, or of the unity of repulsion; but of the unity of attraction and repulsion in each one corpuscle. The essential diversity of the ideas,

unity and sameness, was among the elementary principles of the old logicians; and the sophisms grounded on the confusion of these terms have been ably exposed by Leibnitz, in his critique on Wissowatius, the acutest, perhaps, of all the learned Socinian divines, when Socinian divines were undeniably men of learning.

are on all occasions willing to admit—on the accuracy and competence of the writers who first recorded His acts and sayings. We have learned from you whom—and we now wish to hear from you what—we are to believe. The answer is: the actual occurrence of an extraordinary event, as recorded by the biographers of Jesus, in confirmation of doctrines, without the previous belief of which no man would, or rather, according to St. Paul's declaration, could become a convert to Christianity; doctrines which it is certain that Christ's immediate disciples believed, not less confidently before they had acknowledged His mission than they did afterwards. Religion and politics, they tell us, require but the application of a common sense, which every man possesses, to a subject in which every man is concerned. "To be a musician, an orator, a painter, or even a good mechanician, presupposes genius; to be an excellent artisan or mechanic requires more than an average degree of talent; but to be a legislator or a theologian, or both at once, demands nothing but common sense."\* Now we willingly admit that nothing can be necessary to the salvation of a Christian which is not in his power. For such, therefore, as have neither the opportunity nor the capacity of learning more, sufficient, doubtless, will be the belief of those plain truths, and the fulfilment of those commands, which to be incapable of understanding is to be a man in appearance only. But ever to this scanty creed the disposition of faith must be added: and let it not be forgotten that, though nothing can be easier than to understand a code of belief, four-fifths of which consists in avowals of disbelief, and the remainder in truths concerning which (in this country at least) a man must have taken pains to learn to have any doubt; yet it is by no means easy to reconcile this code of negatives with the declarations of the Christian Scriptures. On the contrary, it requires all the resources of verbal criticism, and all the perverse subtlety of special pleading, to work out a plausible semblance of correspondency between them. It must, however, be conceded, that a man may consistently spare himself the trouble of the attempt, and leave the New Testament unread, after he has once thoroughly persuaded himself that it can teach him nothing of any real importance that he does not already know. St. Paul indeed thought otherwise. For though he too teaches us, that in the religion of Christ there is milk for babes;

\* *The Friend*, vol. i. As the original work, of which but a small number of copies were printed on stamped sheets, and sent to the subscribers by the post, is not to be procured, the reference is made to the edition now printing, in three volumes, of the size of

the British Essayists: if indeed a work, a great part of which is new in substance, and the whole in form and arrangement, can be described as an edition of the former. (This reference will be found at p. 133 in Bohn's Standard Library edition of *The Friend*.)

yet he informs us at the same time that there is meat for strong men! and to the like purpose one of the Fathers has observed, that in the New Testament there are shallows where the lamb may ford, and depths where the elephant must swim. The Apostle exhorts the followers of Christ to the continual study of the new religion, on the ground that in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, and in the riches of Christ, which no research could exhaust, there were contained all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom. Accordingly, in that earnestness of spirit which his own personal experience of the truth inspired, he prays with a solemn and a ceremonious fervour that, being "strengthened with might in the inner man, they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height" of that living principle, at once the giver and the gift! of that anointing faith, which in endless evolution "teaches us of all things, and is truth!" For all things are but parts and forms of its progressive manifestation, and every new knowledge but a new organ of sense and insight into this one all-inclusive verity, which, still filling the vessel of the understanding, still dilates it to a capacity of yet other and yet greater truths, and thus makes the soul feel its poverty by the very amplitude of its present, and the immensity of its reversionary, wealth. All truth indeed is simple, and needs no extrinsic ornament. And the more profound the truth is, the more simple: for the whole labour and building-up of knowledge is but one continued process of simplification. But I cannot comprehend in what ordinary sense of the words the properties of plainness and simplicity can be applied to the Prophets, or to the writings of St. John, or to the epistles of St. Paul; or what can have so marvellously improved the capacity of our laity beyond the same class of persons among the primitive Christians; who, as we are told by a fellow apostle, found in the writings last-mentioned many passages hard to be understood, which the unlearned, as well as the unstable, were in danger of wresting and misinterpreting. I can well understand, however, what is and has been the practical consequence of this notion. It is this very consequence, indeed, that occasioned the preceding remarks, makes them pertinent to my present subject, and gives them a place in the train of argument requisite for its illustration. For what need of any after-recurrence to the sources of information concerning a religion, the whole contents of which can be thoroughly acquired at once and in a few hours? An occasional remembrancing may, perhaps, be expedient; but

what object of study can a man propose to himself in a matter of which he knows all that can be known, all at least that it is of use to know? Like the first rules of arithmetic, its few plain and obvious truths may hourly serve the man's purposes, yet never once occupy his thoughts. But it is impossible that the affections should be kept constant to an object which gives no employment to the understanding. The energies of the intellect, increase of insight, and enlarging views, are necessary to keep alive the substantial faith in the heart. They are the appointed fuel to the sacred fire. In the state of perfection all other faculties may, perhaps, be swallowed up in love; but it is on the wings of the *Cherubim*, which the ancient Hebrew doctors interpreted as meaning the powers and efforts of the intellect, that we must first be borne up to the "pure empyrean": and it must be seraphs and not the hearts of poor mortals that can burn unfuelled and self-fed. "Give me understanding (exclaimed the royal Psalmist) and I shall observe Thy law with my whole heart. Teach me knowledge and good judgment. Thy commandment is exceeding broad: O how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day. The entrance of Thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple. I prevented the dawning of the morning: mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate upon Thy word." Now where the very contrary of this is the opinion of many, and the practice of most, what results can be expected but those which are actually presented to us in our daily experience?

There is one class of men\* who read the Scriptures, when they

\* Whether it be on the increase, as a sect, is doubtful. But it is admitted by all—nay, strange as it may seem, made a matter of boast—that the number of its secret adherents, outwardly of other denominations, is tenfold greater than that of its avowed and incorporated followers. And truly, in our cities and great manufacturing and commercial towns, among lawyers and such of the tradesfolk as are the ruling members in book-clubs, I am inclined to fear that this has not been asserted without good ground. For Socinianism in its present form, consisting almost wholly in attack and imagined detection, has a particular charm for what are called shrewd, knowing men. Besides, the vain and half-educated, whose Christian and surnames in the title pages of our Magazines, *Lady's Diaries*, &c. are the successors of the shame-faced Critos, Philoleutheroes, and Philaletheses in the time of our grandfathers, will be something: and now that Deism has gone out of fashion, Socinianism has swept up its refuse. As the main success of this sect is owing to the small proportion which the affirmative articles of their faith

(*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*) bear to the negative (that is, their belief to their disbelief), it will be an act of kindness to the unwary to bring together the former under one point of view. This is done in the following catalogue, the greater part if not the whole of which may be authenticated from the writings of Mr. Belsham.

1. They believe in one God, professing to differ from other Christians only in holding the Deity to be unipersonal, the Father alone being God, the Son a mere, though an inspired and highly gifted, man, and the Holy Spirit either a synonym of God, or of the divine agency, or of its effects.

2. They believe men's actions necessitated, and consistently with this affirm that the Christian religion (*i.e.* their view of it) precludes all remorse for our sins, they being a present calamity, but not guilt.

3. They believe the Gospels, though not written by inspiration, to be authentic histories on the whole: though with some additions and interpolations. And on the authority of these writings, confirmed by other evidence, they believe in the Resurrec-

do read them, in order to pick and choose their faith; or, to speak more accurately, for the purpose of plucking away *live-asunder*, as it were, from the divine organism of the Bible, textuary mor-

tion of the Man, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

4. On the historic credibility of this event they believe in the resurrection of the body, which in their opinion is the whole man, at the last day: and differ from other churches in this only, that while other Christians believe that all men will arise in the body, they hold, that all the bodies that had been men will arise.

5. A certain indefinite number of mankind thus renewed to life and consciousness, it is the common belief of them all, will be placed in a state of happiness and immortality. But with respect to those who have died in the calamitous condition of unreformed sinfulness (to what extent it is for the Supreme Judge to decide), they are divided among themselves. The one party teach, that such unhappy persons will be raised only to be re-annihilated: the other party contend that there will be a final restoration of all men, with a purgatory or state of remedial discipline, the severity and duration of which will be proportioned to the kind, degree, and obstinacy of the disease, and of which therefore every man is left to his own conjectural hopes and fears: with this comfort however to the very worst (i.e. most unfortunate and erroneous of mankind), that it will be all well with them at last. In this article they differ from the Papists, in having no hell, and in placing their purgatory after, instead of before, the Day of Judgment.

6. Lastly, as they hold only an intellectual and physical, and not a moral difference in the actions and characters of men, they not being free agents, and therefore not more responsible beings than the brute beasts, although their greater powers of memory and comparison render them more susceptible of being acted on by prospective motives (and in this sense they retain the term responsibility, after having purified it by the ex-ination of its old, and the transfusion of a new, meaning)—and as they, with strict consequence, merge all the attributes of Deity in power, intelligence, and benevolence (mercy and justice being modes, or rather perspective views, of the two latter; the holiness of God meaning the same or nothing at all; and His anger, offence, and hatred of moral evil, being mere metaphors and figures of speech addressed to a rude and barbarous people), they profess to hold a Redemption—not however by the Cross of Christ, except as His death was an evidence of His sincerity, and the necessary preliminary to His Resurrection; but—by the effects which this fact of His Resurrection, together with His example, and His re-publication of the moral precepts (taught indeed long before, but, as

they think, not so clearly, by Moses and the Prophets) were calculated to produce on the human mind. So that if it had so happened that a man had been influenced to an innocent and useful life by the example, precepts, and martyrdom of Socrates, Socrates and not Christ would have been his redeemer.

These are all the positives of the modern Socinian creed, and even these it was not possible to extricate wholly from the points of disbelief. But if it should be asked, why this resurrection or re-creation is confined to the human animal, the answer must be—that more than this has not been revealed. And so far all Christians will join assent. But some have added, and in my opinion much to their credit, that they hope it may be the case with the brutes likewise, as they see no sufficient reason to the contrary. And truly upon their scheme I agree with them. For if man be no other or nobler creature essentially than he is represented in their system, the meanest reptile, that maps out its path on the earth by lines of slime, must be of equal worth and respectability, not only in the sight of the Holy One, but by a strange contradiction even before man's own reason. For remove all the sources of esteem and the love founded on esteem, and whatever else presupposes a will and therein a possible transcendence to the material world, mankind as far as my experience has extended (and I am less than the least of many whom I could cite as having formed the very same judgment) are on the whole distinguished from the other beasts incomparably more to their disadvantage, by lying, treachery, ingratitude, massacre, thirst of blood, and by sensualities which both in sort and degree it would be libelling their brother-beasts to call bestial, than to their advantage by a greater extent of intellect. And what indeed, abstracted from the free-will, could this intellect be but a more showy instinct? of more various application indeed, but far less secure, useful, or adapted to its purposes, than the instinct of birds, insects, and the like. In short, as I have elsewhere observed, compared with the wiles and factories of the spider, or with the cunning of the fox, it would be but a more efflorescent, and for that very cause a less efficient, salt to preserve the hog from putrifying before its destined hour.

Well may the words of Isaiah be applied and addressed to the teachers and followers of this sect, or rather, I would say, to their tenets as personified—"The word of the Lord was unto them, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared. Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule

sels, and fragments for the support of doctrines which they had learned beforehand from the higher oracle of their own natural common sense. *Sanctas Scripturas frustant ut frustrent.* Through the gracious dispensations of Providence a complexity of circumstances may co-operate as antidotes to a noxious principle, and realise the paradox of a very good man under a very evil faith. It is not denied, that a Socinian may be as honest, useful, and benevolent a character as any of his neighbours; and if he thinks more, and derives a larger portion of his pleasures from intellectual sources, he is likely to be more so. But in such instances, and I am most willing to bear witness from my own experience that they are not infrequent, the fruit is from the grafts, not from the tree. The native produce is, or would be, an intriguing, overbearing, scornful, and worldly disposition: and in point of fact it is the only scheme of religion that inspires in its adherents a contempt for the understandings of all who differ from them. But be this as it may, and whatever be its effects, it is not probable that Christianity will have any direct influence on men who pay it no other compliment than that of calling by its name the previous dictates and decisions of their own mother-wit.

But the more numerous class is of those who do not trouble themselves at all with religious matters, which they resign to the clergyman of the parish. But while not a few among these men consent to pray and hear by proxy, and while others, more attentive to the prudential advantages of a decorous character, yield the customary evidence of their church-membership, but, this performed, are at peace with themselves, and

“ . . . . . think their Sunday’s task  
As much as God or man can fairly ask;”

there exists amongst the most respectable laity of our cities and great towns an active, powerful, and enlarging minority, whose industry, while it enriches their families, is at the same time a support to the revenue, and not seldom enlivens their whole neighbourhood: men whose lives are free from all disreputable infirmities, and of whose activity in the origination, patronage, and management both of charitable and of religious associations, —who must not have read or heard? and who that has, will dare deny to be most exemplary? After the custom of our forefathers, and their pure household religion,\* these, in so many respects

this people! Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement! Your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. For your bed is

shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” —Isaiah xxviii.

\* And pure religion breathing household laws. — WORDSWORTH.

estimable persons, are for the greater part in the habit of having family prayer and a portion of Scripture read every morning and evening. In this class, with such changes or substitutions as the peculiar tenets of the sect require, we must include the sensible, orderly, and beneficent Society of the Friends, more commonly called Quakers. Here then, if anywhere (that is, in any class of men, for the present argument is not concerned with individuals), we may expect to find Christianity tempering commercial avidity and sprinkling its holy damps on the passion of accumulation. This, I say, we might expect to find, if an undoubting belief in the threats and promises of Revelation, and a consequent regularity of personal, domestic, and social demeanour, sufficed to constitute that Christianity the power and privilege of which is so to renew and irradiate the whole intelligential and moral life of man, as to overcome the spirit of the world. (St. John, Epistle I.) If this, the appointed test, were found wanting, should we not be forced to apprehend, nay, are we not compelled to infer, that the spirit of prudential motive, however ennobled by the magnitude and awfulness of its objects,\* and though, as the termination of a lower, it may be the commencement (and not seldom the occasion) of an higher state, is not, even in respect of morality itself, that abiding and continuous principle of action, which is either *one* with the faith spoken of by St. Paul, or its immediate offspring. It cannot be that *spirit* of obedience to the commands of Christ, by which the soul dwelleth in Him, and He in it (1 John iii. 4), and which our Saviour himself announces

\* And in this alone the late Dr. Paley, by a use of terms altogether arbitrary, places the distinction between prudence and virtue, the former being self-love in its application to the sum of pain and pleasure that is likely to result to us, as the consequence of our actions, in the present life only; while the latter is the same self-love that, together with the present consequences of our actions, takes in likewise the more important enjoyments or sufferings which, according as we obey or disobey His known commands, God has promised to bestow, or threatened to inflict, on us in the life to come. According to this writer, it becomes the duty of a rational free agent (it would be more pertinent to say, of a sentient animal capable of forecast) to reduce his will to an habitual coincidence with his reason, on no other ground, but because he believes that God is able and determined either to gratify or to torment him. Thus, the great principle of the Gospel, that we are bound to love our neighbours as ourselves and God above all, must, if translated into a consistency with this theory of enlightened self-love, run thus: On the ground of our fear of

torment and our expectation of pleasure from an infinitely powerful Being, we are under a prudential obligation of acting towards our neighbours as if we loved them equally with ourselves: but ultimately and in very truth to love ourselves only. And this is the work, this the system of moral and political philosophy cited as highest authority in our senate and courts of judicature! And (still worse!) this is the text-book for the moral lectures at one of our Universities, justly the most celebrated for scientific ardour and manly thinking. 'Tis not without a pang of filial sorrow that the writer makes this acknowledgment, which nothing could have extorted from him but the strongest conviction of the mischievous and debasing tendencies of that wide-spread system, in which the works of Dr. Paley (his Sermons excepted) act not the less pernicious part, because the most decorous and plausible. The fallacious sophistry of the grounding principle in this whole system has been detected by Des Cartes and Bishop Butler: and of late years, with great ability and originality, by Mr. W. Halliut.



as a being born again. And this indispensable act, or influence, or impregnation, of which, as of a divine tradition, the eldest philosophy is not silent; which flashed through the darkness of the pagan mysteries; and which it was therefore a reproach to a master in Israel, that he had not already known (St. John's Gospel. c. iii.)—this is elsewhere explained as a seed which, though of gradual development, did yet potentially contain the essential form, not merely of a better, but of another life: amidst all the frailties and transient eclipses of mortality making, I repeat, the subjects of this regeneration not so properly better as other men, whom therefore the world could not but hate, as aliens. Its own native growth, however, improved by cultivation (whether through the agency of blind sympathies, or of an intelligent self-interest, the utmost heights to which the worldly life can ascend), the world has always been ready and willing to acknowledge and admire. They are of the world: therefore speak they out of the heart of the world (*ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου*) and the world heareth them. (1 John iv.)

To abstain from acts of wrong and violence, to be moreover industrious, useful, and of seemly bearing, are qualities presupposed in the Gospel code, as the preliminary conditions rather than the proper and peculiar effects of Christianity. But they are likewise qualities so palpably indispensable to the temporal interests of mankind that, if we except the brief frenzies of revolutionary riot, there never was a time in which the world did not profess to reverence them: nor can we state any period in which a more than ordinary character for assiduity, regularity, and charitableness did not secure the world's praise and favour, and were not calculated to advance the individual's own worldly interests: provided only, that his manners and professed tenets were those of some known and allowed body of men.

I ask, then, what is the fact? We are—and, till its good purposes, which are many, have been all achieved, and we can become something better, long may we continue such!—a busy, enterprising, and commercial nation. The habits attached to this character must, if there exist no adequate counterpoise, inevitably lead us under the specious names of utility, practical knowledge, and so forth, to look at all things through the medium of the market, and to estimate the worth of all pursuits and attainments by their marketable value. In this does the spirit of trade consist. Now would the general experience bear us out in the assertion that, amid the absence or declension of all other antagonist forces, there is found in the very circle of the trading and opulent themselves, in the increase, namely, of religious professors among

them, a spring of resistance to the excess of the commercial impetus, from the impressive example of their unworldly feelings evidenced by their moderation in worldly pursuits? I fear that we may anticipate the answer, wherever the religious zeal of such professors does not likewise manifest itself, by the glad devotion of as large a portion of their time and industry as the duty of providing a fair competence for themselves and their families leaves at their own disposal, to the comprehension of those inspired writings and the evolution of those pregnant truths which are proposed for our earnest, sedulous research, in order that by occupying our understandings they may more and more assimilate our affections. I fear that the inquiring traveller would more often hear of zealous religionists who have read (and as a duty too and with all due acquiescence) the prophetic, "Woe to them that join house to house and lay field to field, that they may be alone in the land!" and yet find no object deform the beauty of the prospect from their window or even from their castle turrets so annoyingly as a meadow not their own, or a field under ploughing with the beam-end of the plough in the hands of its humble owner! I fear that he must too often make report of men lawful in their dealings, scriptural in their language, alms-givers, and patrons of Sunday schools, who are yet resistless and overawing bidders at all land auctions in their neighbourhood, who live in the centre of farms without leases, and tenants without attachments! Or if his way should lie through our great towns and manufacturing districts, instances would grow cheap with him of wealthy religious practitioners, who never travel for orders without cards of edification in prose and verse, and small tracts of admonition and instruction, all "plain and easy, and suited to the meanest capacities;" who pray daily, as the first act of the morning and as the last of the evening, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; and employ all the interval with an edge of appetite keen as the scythe of death in the pursuit of yet more and yet more of a temptation so perilous, that (as they have full often read, and heard read, without the least questioning, or whisper of doubt) no power short of Omnipotence could make their deliverance from it credible or conceivable. Of all denominations of Christians, there is not one in existence or on record whose whole scheme of faith and worship was so expressly framed for the one purpose of spiritualizing the mind and of abstracting it from the vanities of the world, as the Society of Friends! not one, in which the church members are connected, and their professed principles enforced, by so effective and wonderful a form

of discipline. But in the zeal of their founders and first proselytes for perfect spirituality they excluded from their system all ministers specially trained and educated for the ministry, with all professional theologians: and they omitted to provide for the raising up among themselves any other established class of learned men, as teachers and schoolmasters, for instance, in their stead. Even at this day, though the Quakers are in general remarkably shrewd and intelligent in all worldly concerns, yet learning, and more particularly theological learning, is more rare among them in proportion to their wealth and rank in life, and held in less value, than among any other known sect of Christians. What has been the result? If the occasion permitted, I could dilate with pleasure on their decent manners and decorous morals, as individuals, and their exemplary and truly illustrious philanthropic efforts as a body. From all the gayer and tinsel vanities of the world their discipline has preserved them, and the English character owes to their example some part of its manly plainness in externals. But my argument is confined to the question, whether religion in its present state and under the present conceptions of its demands and purposes does, even among the most religious, exert any efficient force of control over the commercial spirit, the excess of which we have attributed, not to the extent and magnitude of the commerce itself, but to the absence or imperfection of its appointed checks and counter-agents. Now as the system of the Friends in its first intention is of all others most hostile to worldly-mindedness on the one hand, and as, on the other, the adherents of this system both in confession and practice confine Christianity to feelings and motives, they may be selected as representatives of the strict but unstudied and uninquiring religionists of every denomination. Their characteristic propensities will supply, therefore, no unfair test for the degree of resistance which our present Christianity is capable of opposing to the cupidity of a trading people—that species of Christianity I mean, which, as far as knowledge and the faculties of thought are concerned—which, as far as the growth and grandeur of the intellectual man is in question—is to be learnt extempore! A Christianity poured in on the catechumen all and all at once, as from a shower-bath: and which, whatever it may be in the heart, yet for the understanding and reason is from boyhood onward a thing past and perfected! If the almost universal opinion be tolerably correct, the question is answered. But I by no means appropriate the remark to the wealthy Quakers, or even apply it to them in any particular or eminent sense, when I say that,

often as the motley reflexes of my experience move in long procession of manifold groups before me, the distinguished and world-honoured company of Christian mammonists appear to the eye of my imagination as a drove of camels heavily laden, yet all at full speed, and each in the confident expectation of passing through the eye of the needle, without stop or halt, both beast and baggage.

Not without an uneasy reluctance have I ventured to tell the truth on this subject, lest I should be charged with the indulgence of a satirical mood and an uncharitable spleen. But my conscience bears me witness, and I know myself too near the grave to trifle with its name, that I am solely actuated by a sense of the exceeding importance of the subject at the present moment. I feel it an awful duty to exercise the honest liberty of free utterance in so dear a concernment as that of preparing my country for a change in its external relations, which must come sooner or later; which I believe to have already commenced; and that it will depend on the presence or absence of a corresponding change in the mind of the nation, and above all in the aims and ruling opinions of our gentry and moneyed men, whether it is to cast down our strength and prosperity, or to fix them on a firmer and more august basis. "Surely to every good and peaceable man it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; but when God commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say and what he shall conceal."

That my complaints, both in this and in my former Lay Sermon, concerning the same errors, are not grounded on any peculiar notions of mine, the following remarks of a great and good man, not less illustrious for his piety and fervent zeal as a Christian than for his acuteness and profundity as a philosopher, may, perhaps, be accepted as proof.

"Prevailing studies," he observes, "are of no small consequence to a state, the religion, manners, and civil government of a country ever taking some bias from its philosophy, which affects not only the minds of its professors and students, but also the opinions of all the better sort, and the practice of the whole people, remotely and consequentially indeed, though not inconsiderably. Have not the doctrines of necessity and materialism, with the consequent denial of man's responsibility, of his corrupt and fallen nature, and of the whole scheme of Redemption by the incarnate Word, gained ground during the general passion for the corpuscularian and experimental philosophy which hath prevailed about a century? This, indeed, might usefully enough

have employed some share of the leisure and curiosity of inquisitive persons. But when it entered the seminaries of learning as a necessary accomplishment and as the most important part of knowledge, by engrossing men's thoughts and fixing their minds so much on corporeal objects, it hath, however undesignedly, not a little indisposed them for spiritual, moral, and intellectual matters. Certainly, had the philosophy of Pythagoras and Socrates prevailed in this age, we should not have seen interest take so general and fast hold on the minds of men. But while the employment of the mind on things purely intellectual is to most men irksome, whereas the sensitive powers, by our constant use of them, acquire strength, the objects of sense are too often counted the chief good. For these things men fight, cheat, and scramble. Therefore, in order to tame mankind and introduce a sense of virtue, the best human means is to exercise their understanding, to give them a glimpse of a world superior to the sensible; and while they take pains to cherish and maintain the animal life, to teach them not to neglect the intellectual.

"It might very well be thought serious trifling to tell my readers that the greatest men had ever a high esteem for Plato; whose writings are the touchstone of a hasty and shallow mind; whose philosophy, the admiration of ages, supplied patriots, magistrates, and lawgivers, to the most flourishing states, as well fathers to the Church and doctors to the schools. In these days the depths of that old learning are rarely fathomed: and yet it were happy for these lands if our young nobility and gentry, instead of modern maxims, would imbibe the notions of the great men of antiquity. But in these free-thinking times, many an empty head is shook at Aristotle and Plato: and the writings of these celebrated ancients are by most men treated on a level with the dry and barbarous lucubrations of the schoolmen. It may, however, be modestly presumed that there are not many among us, even of those that are called the better sort, who have more sense, virtue, and love of their country than Cicero, who in a letter to Atticus could not forbear exclaiming, *O Socrates et Socratici Viri! nunquam vobis gratiam referam.* Would to God many of our countrymen had the same obligations to those Socratic writers! Certainly, where the people are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best learnt from the writings of Plato. But among a people void of discipline, and a gentry devoted to vulgar cares and views, Plato, Pythagoras, and Aristotle themselves, were they living, could do but little good."

Thus, then, of the three most approved antagonists to the

spirit of barter, and the accompanying disposition to overvalue riches with all the means and tokens thereof—of the three fittest and most likely checks to this tendency, namely, the feeling of ancient birth and the respect paid to it by the community at large; a genuine intellectual philosophy, with an accredited, learned, and philosophic class; and, lastly, religion; we have found the first declining, the second not existing, and the third efficient, indeed, in many respects and to many excellent purposes, only not in this particular direction: the religion here spoken of having long since parted company with that inquisitive and bookish theology which tends to defraud the student of his worldly wisdom, inasmuch as it diverts his mind from the accumulation of wealth by pre-occupying his thoughts in the acquisition of knowledge. For the religion of best repute among us holds all the truths of Scripture and all the doctrines of Christianity so very transcendent, or so very easy, as to make study and research either vain or needless. It professes, therefore, to hunger and thirst after righteousness alone, and the rewards of the righteous; and thus habitually taking for granted all truths of spiritual import, leaves the understanding vacant and at leisure for a thorough insight into present and temporal interests, which, doubtless, is the true reason why its followers are in general such shrewd, knowing, wary, well-informed, thrifty, and thriving men of business. But this is likewise the reason why it neither does nor can check or circumscribe the spirit of barter; and to the consequent monopoly which this commercial spirit possesses must its overbalance be attributed, not to the extent or magnitude of the commerce itself.

Before I enter on the result assigned by me as the chief ultimate cause of the present state of the country, and as the main ground on which the immediate occasions of the general distress have worked, I must entreat my readers to reflect that the spirit of trade has been a thing of insensible growth; that whether it be enough, or more or less than enough, is a matter of relative rather than of positive determination; that it depends on the degree in which it is aided or resisted by all the other tendencies that co-exist with it; and that in the best of times this spirit may be said to live on a narrow isthmus between a sterile desert and a stormy sea, still threatened and encroached on either by the too much or the too little. As the argument does not depend on any precise accuracy in the dates, I shall assume it to have commenced, as an influencing part of the national character, with the institution of the funds in the reign of William the Third; and from the

peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, to have been hurrying onward to its maximum, which it seems to have attained during the late war. The short interruptions may be well represented as a few steps backward, that it might leap forward with an additional momentum. The words, old and modern, then and now, are applied by me, the latter to the whole period since the Revolution, and the former to the interval between this epoch and the Reformation; the one from 1460 to 1680, the other from 1680 to the present time.

Having premised this explanation, I can now return an intelligible answer to a question that will have arisen in the reader's mind during his perusal of the last three or four pages. How, it will be objected, does all this apply to the present times in particular? When was the industrious part of mankind not attached to the pursuits most likely to reward their industry? Was the wish to make a fortune, or, if you prefer an invidious phrase, the lust of lucre, less natural to our forefathers than to their descendants? If you say that, though a not less frequent or less powerful passion with them than with us, it yet met with a more frequent and more powerful check, a stronger and more advanced boundary-line, in the religion of old times, and in the faith, fashion, habits, and authority of the religious: in what did this difference consist? and in what way did these points of difference act? If, indeed, the antidote in question once possessed virtues which it no longer possesses, or not in the same degree, what is the ingredient, either added, omitted, or diminished since that time, which can have rendered it less efficacious now than then?

Well (I might reply), grant all this: and let both the profession and the professors of a spiritual principle, as a counterpoise to the worldly weights at the other end of the balance, be supposed much the same in the one period as in the other. Assume, for a moment, that I can establish neither the fact of its lesser efficiency, nor any points of difference capable of accounting for it. Yet it might still be a sufficient answer to this objection that, as the commerce of the country, and with it the spirit of commerce, has increased fifty-fold since the commencement of the latter period, it is not enough that the counter-weight should be as great as it was in the former period: to remain the same in its effect, it ought to have become very much greater. But though this be a consideration not less important than it is obvious, yet I do not purpose to rest in it. I affirm that a difference may be shown, and of no trifling importance as to that one point, to which my present argument is confined. For let it be remem-

bered that it is not to any extraordinary influences of the religious principle that I am referring, not to voluntary poverty, or sequestration from social and active life, or schemes of mortification. I speak of religion merely as I should of any worldly object, which, as far as it employs and interests a man, leaves less room in his mind for other pursuits: except that this must be more especially the case in the instance of religion, because beyond all other interests it is calculated to occupy the whole mind, and employ successively all the faculties of man; and because the objects which it presents to the imagination as well as to the intellect cannot be actually contemplated, much less can they be the subject of frequent meditation, without dimming the lustre and blunting the rays of all rival attractions. It is well known, and has been observed of old, that poetry tends to render its devotees \* careless of money and outward appearances, while philosophy inspires a contempt of both as objects of desire or admiration. But religion is the poetry and philosophy of all mankind; unites in itself whatever is most excellent in either, and, while it at one and the same time calls into action and supplies with the noblest materials both the imaginative and the intellective faculties, superadds the interests of the most substantial and home-felt reality to both, to the poetic vision and the philosophic idea. But in order to produce a similar effect it must act in a similar way: it must reign in the thoughts of a man, and in the powers akin to thought, as well as exercise an admitted influence over his hopes and fears, and through these on his deliberate and individual acts.

Now as my first presumptive proof of a difference (I might almost have said, of a contrast) between the religious character of the period since the Revolution, and that of the period from the accession of Edward the Sixth to the abdication of the second James, I refer to the sermons and to the theological works generally of the latter period. It is my full conviction, that in any half dozen sermons of Dr. Donne, or Jeremy Taylor, there are more thoughts, more facts and images, more excitements to inquiry and intellectual effort, than are presented to the congregations of the present day in as many churches or meetings during twice as many months. Yet both these were the most popular preachers of their times, were heard with enthusiasm by crowded

\* *Hic error tamen et levis hæc insaniam  
quantas*

*Virtutes habeat, sic collige: vatis avarus  
Non temere est animus; versus amat, hoc  
studet unum;*

*Detrimenta, fugas servorum, incendia  
ridet;*

*Non fraudem socio puerove incogitat  
ullam*

*Pupillo; vivit siliquis et pane secundo;  
Militia quamquam piger et malus, utili  
urbi.*

HORAT. EPIST. II. 1.



and promiscuous audiences, and the effect produced by their eloquence was held in reverential and affectionate remembrance by many attendants on their ministry, who, like the pious Isaac Walton, were not themselves men of learning or education. In addition to this fact, think likewise on the large and numerous editions of massy, closely printed folios: the impressions so large and the editions so numerous, that all the industry of destruction for the last hundred years has but of late sufficed to make them rare. From the long list select those works alone which we know to have been the most current and favourite works of their day: and of these again no more than may well be supposed to have had a place in the scantiest libraries, or perhaps, with the Bible and Common Prayer Book, to have formed the library of their owner. Yet on the single shelf so filled we should find almost every possible question that could interest or instruct a reader whose whole heart was in his religion, discussed with a command of intellect that seems to exhaust all the learning and logic, all the historical and moral relations, of each several subject. The very length of the discourses, with which these "rich souls of wit and knowledge" fixed the eyes, ears, and hearts of their crowded congregations, are a source of wonder now-a-days, and (we may add) of self-congratulation, to many a sober Christian, who forgets with what delight he himself has listened to a two hours' harangue on a loan or tax, or at the trial of some remarkable cause or culprit. The transfer of the interest makes and explains the whole difference. For though much may be fairly charged on the Revolution in the mode of preaching as well as in the matter, since the fresh morning and fervent noon of the Reformation, when there was no need to visit the conventicles of fanaticism in order to

" See God's ambassador in the pulpit stand,  
Where they could take notes from his look and hand;  
And from his speaking action bear away  
More sermon than our preachers use to say;"

yet this too must be referred to the same change in the habits of men's minds—a change that involves both the shepherd and the flock: though, like many other effects, it tends to reproduce and strengthen its own cause.

The last point to which I shall appeal is the warmth and frequency of the religious controversies during the former of the two periods; the deep interest excited by them among all but the lowest and most ignorant classes; the importance attached to them by the very highest; the number, and in many instances the

transcendent merit, of the controversial publications—in short, the rank and value assigned to polemic divinity. The subjects of the controversies may or may not have been trifling; the warmth with which they were conducted may have been disproportionate and indecorous; and we may have reason to congratulate ourselves that the age in which we live is grown more indulgent and less captious. The fact is introduced not for its own sake, but as a symptom of the general state of men's feelings, as an evidence of the direction and main channel, in which the thoughts and interests of men were then flowing. We all know, that lovers are apt to take offence and wrangle with each other on occasions that perhaps are but trifles, and which assuredly would appear such to those who had never been under the influence of a similar passion. These quarrels may be no proofs of wisdom; but still in the imperfect state of our nature the entire absence of the same, and this too on far more serious provocations, would excite a strong suspicion of a comparative indifference in the feelings of the parties towards each other, who can love so coolly where they profess to love so well. I shall believe our present religious tolerancy to proceed from the abundance of our charity and good sense, when I can see proofs that we are equally cool and forbearing, as litigators and political partisans. And I must again entreat my reader to recollect, that the present argument is exclusively concerned with the requisite correctives of the commercial spirit, and with religion therefore no otherwise than as a countercharm to the sorcery of wealth: and my main position is, that neither by reasons drawn from the nature of the human mind, or by facts of actual experience, are we justified in expecting this from a religion which does not employ and actuate the understandings of men, and combine their affections with it as a system of truth gradually and progressively manifesting itself to the intellect; no less than as a system of motives and moral commands learnt as soon as heard, and containing nothing but what is plain and easy to the lowest capacities. Hence it is, that objects, the ostensible principle of which I have felt it my duty to oppose (vide the STATESMAN'S MANUAL, p. 328), and objects the which, and the measures for the attainment of which, possess my good wishes and have had the humble tribute of my public advocacy and applause—I am here alluding to the British and Foreign Bible Society—may yet converge, as to the point now in question. They may, both alike, be symptoms of the same predominant disposition to that Coalition system in Christianity, for the expression of which theologians have invented or appropriated the term

**Syncretism.\*** although the former may be an ominous, the latter an auspicious symptom, though the one may be worse from bad, while the other is an instance of good educes from evil. Nay, I will dare confess, that I know not how to think otherwise, when I hear a Bishop of an established Church publicly exclaim (and not viewing it as a lesser inconvenience to be endured for the attainment of a far greater good, but as a thing desirable and to be referred for its own sake), "No notes! No comment! Distribute the Bible and the Bible only among the poor!"—a declaration, which from any lower quarter I should have been under the temptation of attributing either to a fanatical notion of immediate illumination superseding the necessity of human teaching, or to an ignorance of difficulties which (and what more worthy?) have successfully employed all the learning, sagacity, and unwearied labours of great and wise men and eminent servants of Christ during all the ages of Christianity, and will doubtless continue to yield new fruits of knowledge and insight to a long series of followers.†

Though an overbalance of the commercial spirit is involved in the deficiency of its counter-weights, yet the facts that exemplify

\* *Clementia Evangelica* (writes a German theologian of the last century) *quasi matrona habenda est, purioris doctrinae custos, mitis quidem, at sedula tamen, at vigilans, at seductorum impatiens. Isle vero Syncretismus, quem Laodiceni apud nos tantopere collaudant, nusquam a me nisi meretricis audiet, fidei vel pigræ vel status sui ignarus proles, postea autem indolis secularis generitia, et quæcum nec sincera fides, nec genuina caritas commoari feret.*

*Translation.*—The true Gospel spirit of toleration we should regard as a matron, a kind and gentle guardian indeed of the pure doctrine, but sedulous, but vigilant, but impatient of seducers. This Syncretism, on the contrary, which the Laodiceans amongst us join in extolling so highly, shall no where hear from me other or better name than that of harlot, the offspring of a belief either slothful or ignorant of its own condition, and then the parent of worldly-mindedness, and with whom therefore neither sincere faith nor genuine charity will endure to associate.

† I am well aware, that by these open avowals, that with much to honour and praise in many, there is something to correct in all, parties, I shall provoke many enemies and make never a friend. If I dared abstain, how gladly should I have so done! Would that the candid part of my judges would peruse or re-peruse the affecting and most eloquent introductory pages of Milton's second book of his "Reason of Church Government urged, &c.:" and give me the

credit, which (my conscience bears me witness) I am entitled to claim, for all the moral feelings expressed in that exquisite passage. The following paragraph I extract from a volume of my own, which has been long printed, for the greater part, and which will, I trust, now be soon published.

"All my experience from my first entrance into life to the present hour is in favour of the warning maxim, that the man who opposes in *toto* the political or religious zealots of his age, is safer from their obloquy than he who differs from them in any one or two points or perhaps only in degree. By that transfer of the feelings of private life into the discussions of public questions, which is the *queen bee* in the hive of party fanaticism, the partisan has more sympathy with an intemperate opposite than with a moderate Friend. We now enjoy an intermission, and long may it continue! In addition to far higher and more important merits, our present Bible Societies, and other numerous associations for national or charitable objects, may serve perhaps to carry off the superfluous acclivity and fervour of stirring minds in innocent hyperboles and the bustle of management. But the poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may for a season have subsided to its roots. At least, let us not be lulled into such a notion of our entire security, as not to keep watch and ward, even on our best feelings. I have seen gross intolerance shown in support of toleration; sectarian antipathy most obtrusively displayed in the

the mode and extent of its operation will afford a more direct and satisfactory kind of proof. And first I am to speak of this overbalance as displayed in the commercial world itself. But as this is the first, so is it for my present purpose the least important point of view. A portion of the facts belonging to this division of the subject I have already noticed, pp. 397, 398; and for the remainder let the following suffice as the substitute or representative. The moral of the tale I leave to the reader's own reflections. Within the last sixty years, or perhaps a somewhat larger period (for I do not pretend to any nicety of dates, and the documents are of easy access), there have occurred, at intervals of about twelve or thirteen years each, certain periodical revolutions of credit. Yet revolution is not the precise word. To state the thing as it is, I ought to have said, certain gradual expansions of credit ending in sudden contractions, or, with equal propriety, ascensions to a certain utmost possible height, which has been different in each successive instance; but in every instance the attainment of this, its *ne plus ultra*, has been instantly announced by a rapid series of explosions (in mercantile language, a crash), and a consequent precipitation of the general system. For a short time this Icarian \* credit, or rather this illegitimate offspring of confidence, to which it stands in the same relation as Phaethon to his parent god in the old fable, seems to lie stunned by the fall; but soon recovering, again it strives upward, and having once more regained its mid-region,

" Thence many a league,  
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides  
Audacious!"

PARADISE LOST

till at the destined zenith of its vaporous exaltation, "all unawares, fluttering its pennons vain, plump down it drops!" Or that I may descend myself to the "cool element of prose," alarm and suspicion gradually diminish into a judicious circumspectness; but by little and little, circumspection gives way to the desire and emulous ambition of doing business; till impatience and incaution on one side, tempting and encouraging headlong adventure, want of

promotion of an undistinguishing comprehension of sects; and acts of cruelty (I had almost said of treachery), committed in furtherance of an object vitally important to the cause of humanity; and all this by men too of naturally kind dispositions and exemplary conduct."—*Biographia Literaria, or Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions*, p. 92.

\* "Icarus, Son of Dædalus, who flying with his father from Crete flew too high, whereby the sun melting his waxen wings, he fell into

the sea, from him named the Icarian Sea."—AINSWORTH. By turning back to the word Dædalus, the reader will find such a striking and ingenious allegory of the manufacturing system, its connections with a forced or contraband trade, and its successful evasions of what has been lately called the continental system, as may induce him to forgive the triteness and school-boy character which all allusions of this sort have at first sight for a sensible mind.

principle, and confederacies of false credit on the other, the movements of trade become yearly gayer and giddier, and end at length in a vortex of hopes and hazards, of blinding passions and blind practices, which should have been left, where alone they ought ever to have been found, among the wicked lunacies of the gaming-table.

I am not ignorant that the power and circumstantial prosperity of the nation has been increasing during the same period, with an accelerated force unprecedented in any country, the population of which bore the same proportion to its productive soil: and partly, perhaps, even in consequence of this system. By facilitating the means of enterprise, it must have called into activity a multitude of enterprising individuals and a variety of talent that would otherwise have lain dormant: while by the same ready supply of excitements to labour, together with its materials and instruments, even an unsound credit has been able within a short time to \* substantiate itself. We shall, perhaps, be told too that the very evils of this system, even the periodical crash itself, are to be regarded but as so much superfluous steam ejected by the escape pipes and safety valves of a self-regulating machine: and lastly, that in a free and trading country all things find their level.

I have as little disposition as motive to recant the principles, which in many forms and through various channels I have laboured to propagate; but there is surely no inconsistency in yielding all due honour to the spirit of trade, and yet charging sundry evils, that weaken or reverse its blessings, on the overbalance of that spirit, taken as the paramount principle of action in the nation at large. Much I still concede to the arguments for the present scheme of things as adduced in the preceding paragraph: but I likewise see, and always have seen, much that needs winnowing. Thus, instead of the position that all things find, it would be less equivocal and far more descriptive of the fact to say that things are always finding their level: which might be taken as the paraphrase or ironical definition of a storm, but would be

\* If by the display of forged bank notes a speculator should establish the belief of his being a man of large fortune, and gain a temporary confidence in his own paper-money; and if by large wages so paid he should stimulate a number of indolent Highlanders to bring a tract of waste land into profitable cultivation, the promissory notes of the owner, which derived their first value from a delusion, would end in representing a real property, and this their own product. A most improbable case! In its accidental features, I reply, rather than in its essentials. How many thousand acres have been reclaimed from utter unproductiveness, how

many doubled in value, by the agency of notes issued beyond the bona fide capital of the bank or firm that circulated them, or at best on capital afloat and insecure.

In this section of the present address, I consider myself as having redeemed a promise, made by me (November 1809) in the Essay "On Vulgar Errors concerning Taxation." Having demonstrated the favourable influences of the system "On our Political Strength and Circumstantial Prosperity," The Friend added the following pledge: "What have been its injurious effects on our literature, morals, and religious principles, I shall hereafter develope with the same boldness."

still more appropriate to the Mosaic chaos ere its brute tendencies had been enlightened by the Word (*i. e.* the communicative intelligence), and before the Spirit of Wisdom\* moved on the level-finding waters. But persons are not things—but man does not find his level. Neither in body nor in soul does the man find his level! After a hard and calamitous season, during which the thousand wheels of some vast manufactory had remained silent as a frozen waterfall, be it that plenty has returned and that trade has once more become brisk and stirring: go, ask the overseer, and question the parish doctor, whether the workman's health and temperance with the staid and respectful manners best taught by the inward dignity of conscious self-support, have found their level again? Alas! I have more than once seen a group of children in Dorsetshire, during the heat of the dog-days, each with its little shoulders up to its ears, and its chest pinched inward—the very habit and fixtures, as it were, that had been impressed on their frames by the former ill-fed, ill-clothed, and unfuelled winters. But as with the body, so or still worse with the mind. Nor is the effect confined to the labouring classes, whom by an ominous but too appropriate a change in our phraseology we are now accustomed to call the labouring poor. I cannot persuade myself that the frequency of failures with all the disgraceful secrets of fraud and folly, of unprincipled vanity in expending and desperate speculation in retrieving, can be familiarised to the thoughts and experience of men, as matters of daily occurrence, without serious injury to the moral sense: more especially in times when bankruptcies spread like a fever, at once contagious and epidemic; swift too as the travel of an earthquake, that with one and the same chain of shocks opens the ruinous chasm in cities that have an ocean between them!—in times when the fate flies swifter than the fear, and yet the report that follows the flash has a ruin of its own, and arrives but to multiply the blow!—when princely capitals are often but the telegraphs of distant calamity: and still worse, when no man's treasure is safe who has adopted the ordinary means of safety, neither the high nor the humble; when the lord's rents and the farmer's store, entrusted perhaps but as yesterday, are asked after at closed doors!—but worst of all, in its moral influences as well as in the cruelty of suffering, when the old labourer's savings, the precious robberies of self-denial from every day's comfort; when the orphan's funds, the widow's

\* *Zōfía*, wisdom (that is, reason in action or energy), was the name by which the Christians and Christian writers of the three first

centuries most commonly addressed and distinguished the Holy Ghost.

liveliness, the fond confiding sister's humble fortune, are found among the victims to the remorseless mania of dishonest speculation, or to the desperate cowardice of embarrassment, and the drunken stupor of a usurious selfishness that for a few months' respite dares incur a debt of guilt and infamy, for which the grave itself can plead no statute of limitation. Name to me any revolution recorded in history that was not followed by a depuration of the national morals. The Roman character during the Triumvirate, and under Tiberius, the reign of Charles the Second, and Paris at the present moment, are obvious instances. What is the main cause? The sense of insecurity. On what ground, then, dare we hope that, with the same accompaniment, commercial revolutions should not produce the same effect in proportion to the extent of their sphere?

But these blessings, with all the specific terms, into which this most comprehensive phrase is to be resolved? Dare we unpack the bales and cases so marked, and look at the articles, one by one? Increase of human life and increase of the means of life are, it is true, reciprocally cause and effect: and the genius of commerce and manufacture has been the cause of both to a degree that may well excite our wonder. But do the last results justify our exultation likewise? Human life, alas! is but the malleable metal, out of which the thievish picklock, the slave's collar, and the assassin's stiletto are formed, as well as the clearing axe, the feeding ploughshare, the defensive sword, and the mechanic tool. But the subject is a painful one: and fortunately the labours of others, with the communications of medical men concerning the state of the manufacturing poor, have rendered it unnecessary. I will rather (though in strict method it should perhaps be reserved for the following head) relate a speech made to me near Fort Augustus, as I was travelling on foot through the Highlands of Scotland. The speaker was an elderly and respectable widow, who expressed herself with that simple eloquence which strong feeling seldom fails to call forth in humble life, but especially in women. She spoke English, as indeed most Highlanders do who speak it at all, with a propriety of phrase and a discrimination of tone and emphasis that more than compensated for the scantiness of her vocabulary. After an affecting account of her own wrongs and ejection (which however, she said, bore with comparative lightness on her, who had had saved up for her a wherewithal to live, and was blessed with a son well to do in the world), she made a movement with her hand in a circle, directing my eye meanwhile to various objects as marking its outline: and then observed, with

a deep sigh and a suppressed and slow voice which she suddenly raised and quickened after the first drop or cadence—"Within this space—how short a time back!—there lived a hundred and seventy-three persons: and now there is only a shepherd, and an underling or two. Yes, sir! One hundred and seventy-three Christian souls, man, woman, boy, girl, and babe; and in almost every home an old man by the fire-side, who would tell you of the troubles, before our roads were made; and many a brave youth among them who loved the birthplace of his forefathers, yet would swing about his broad-sword and want but a word to march off to the battles over sea; aye, sir, and many a good lass, who had a respect for herself. Well, but they are gone, and with them the bristled bear,\* and the pink haver,† and the potato plot that looked as gay as any flower-garden with its blossoms! I sometimes fancy that the very birds are gone—all but the crows and the gleads! Well, and what then? Instead of us all, there is one shepherd man, and it may be a pair of small lads—and a many, many sheep! And do you think, sir, that God allows of such proceedings?"

Some days before this conversation, and while I was on the shores of the Loch Katrine,‡ I had heard of a sad counterpart to the widow's tale, and told with a far fiercer indignation, of a "Laird who had raised a company from the country round about, for the love that was borne to his name, and who gained high preferment in consequence: and that it was but a small part of those that he took away whom he brought back again. And what were the thanks which the folks had both for those that came back with him, some blind and more in danger of blindness, and for those that had perished in the hospitals, and for those that fell in battle, fighting before or beside him? Why, that their fathers were all turned out of their farms before the year was over, and sent to wander like so many gipsies, unless they would consent to shed their gray hairs, at tenpence a day, over the new canals. Had there been a price set upon his head, and his enemies had been coming upon him, he needed but have whistled, and a hundred brave lads would have made a wall of flame round about him with the flash of their broad-swords! Now if the French should come among us, as (it is said) they will, let him whistle to his sheep and see if they will fight for him!" The frequency with which I heard,

\* A species of barley.

† A species of oats.

‡ The lake so widely celebrated since then by a poet, to whose writings a larger number of persons have owed a larger portion of innocent, refined, and heart-bettering amusement than perhaps to any favourite of the

Muses recorded in English literature: while the most learned of his readers must feel grateful for the mass of interesting and highly instructive information scattered throughout his works, in which respect Southey is his only rival.



during my solitary walk from the end of Loch Lomond to Inverness, confident expectations of the kind expressed in his concluding words—nay, far too often eager hopes mingled with vindictive resolves—I spoke of with complaint and regret to an elderly man, whom by his dress and way of speaking I took to be a schoolmaster. Long shall I recollect his reply: “O, sir, it kills a man’s love for his country, the hardships of life coming by change and with injustice!” I was some time afterwards told by a very sensible person who had studied the mysteries of political economy, and was therefore entitled to be listened to, that more food was produced in consequence of this revolution, that the mutton must be eat somewhere, and what difference where? If three were fed at Manchester instead of two at Glencoe or the Trosachs, the balance of human enjoyment was in favour of the former. I have passed through many a manufacturing town since then, and have watched many a group of old and young, male and female, going to, or returning from, many a factory, but I could never yet persuade myself to be of his opinion. Men, I still think, ought to be weighed, not counted. Their worth ought to be the final estimate of their value.

Among the occasions and minor causes of this change in the views and measures of our land-owners, and as being itself a consequent on that system of credit, the outline of which was given in a preceding page, the universal practice of enhancing the sale price of every article on the presumption of bad debts is not the least noticeable. Nor, if we reflect that this additional per centage is repeated at each intermediate stage of its elaboration and distribution from the grower or importer to the last retailer inclusively, will it appear the least operative. Necessary, and therefore justifiable, as this plan of reprisal by anticipation may be in the case of each individual dealer, yet taken collectively and without reference to persons, the plan itself would, I suspect, startle an unfamiliarised conscience, as a sort of nondescript piracy, not promiscuous in its exactions only because by a curious anomaly it grants a free pass to the offending party. Or if the law maxim, *volentibus non fit injuria*, is applicable in this case, it may perhaps be described more courteously as a benefit society of all the careful and honest men in the kingdom to pay the debts of the dishonest or improvident. It is mentioned here, however, as one of the appendages to the twin paramount causes, the paper currency and the national debt, and for the sake of the conjoint results. Would we learn what these results are? What they have been in the higher, and what in the most numerous, class of

society? Alas! that some of the intermediate rounds in the social ladder have been broken and not replaced, is itself one of these results. Retrace the progress of things from 1792 to 1813, when the tide was at its height, and then, as far as its rapidity will permit, the ebb from its first turn to the dead low-water mark of the last quarter. Then see whether the remainder may not be generalised under the following heads. Fluctuation in the wages of labour, alternate privation and excess (not in all at the same time, but successively in each), consequent improvidence, and over all discontent and a system of factious confederacy—these form the history of the mechanics and lower ranks of our cities and towns. In the country, a peasantry sinking into pauperism, step for step with the rise of the farmer's profits and indulgences. On the side of the landlord and his compeers, we shall find the presence of the same causes attested by answerable effects. Great as "their almost magical effects"\* on the increase of prices were in the necessaries of life, they were still greater, disproportionally greater, in all articles of show and luxury. With few exceptions, it soon became difficult, and at length impracticable, for the gentry of the land, for the possessors of fixed property to retain the rank of their ancestors, or their own former establishments, without joining in the general competition under the influence of the same trading spirit. Their dependents were of course either selected from, or driven into, the same eddy; while the temptation of obtaining more than the legal interest for their principal became more and more strong with all persons who, neither trading nor farming, had lived on the interest of their fortunes. It was in this latter class that the rash, and too frequently the unprincipled, projector found his readiest dupes. Had we but the secret history of the building speculations only in the vicinity of the metropolis, too many of its pages would supply an afflicting but instructive comment. That both here, and in all other departments, this increased momentum in the spirit of trade has been followed by results of the most desirable nature, I have myself† exerted my

\* During the composition of this sheet I have had, and availed myself of the opportunity of perusing the Report of the Board of Agriculture for the year 1816. The numerous reflections, which this most extraordinary volume excited in my mind, I cannot even touch on, in this closing sheet of an address that has already extended far beyond my original purpose. But had I perused it at the commencement, I should still have felt it my duty to direct the main force of my animadversions against the demagogue class of state-empirics. I was not, indeed, ignorant of

the aid which they derived from other quarters:—nor am I now ashamed of not having anticipated its extent. There is, however, one communication (pp. 208 to 227) from Mr. Mosely, from which, with the abatement only of the passage on tithes, I cannot withhold my entire admiration. It almost redeems the remainder of the Report.

† In a variety of articles published at different periods in the *Morning Post* and *Courier*, but with most success in the *Essay*, before cited, on *Vulgar errors on Taxation*, which had the advantage of being transferred

best powers to evince, at a period when to present the fairest and most animating features of the system, and to prove their vast and charm-like influence on the power and resources of the nation, appeared a duty of patriotism. Nothing, however, was advanced incompatible with the position, which even then I did not conceal, and which from the same sense of duty I am now attempting to display; namely, that the extension of the commercial spirit into our agricultural system, added to the overbalance of the same spirit, even within its own sphere, aggravated by the operation of our revenue laws, and finally reflected in the habits and tendencies of the labouring classes, is the groundwork of our calamity, and the main predisposing cause, without which the late occasions would (some of them not have existed, and the remainder) not have produced the present distresses.

That agriculture requires principles essentially different from those of trade,—that a gentleman ought not to regard his estate as a merchant his cargo, or a shopkeeper his stock,—admits of an easy proof from the different tenure of landed property,\* and from the purposes of agriculture itself, which ultimately are the same as those of the State of which it is the offspring. (For we do not include in the name of agriculture the cultivation of a few vegetables by the women of the less savage hunter tribes.) If the continuance and independence of the State be its object, the final causes of the State must be its final causes. We suppose the negative ends of a State already attained, viz. its own safety by means of its own strength, and the protection of person and property for all its members, there will then remain its positive ends:

almost entire to the columns of a daily paper, of the largest circulation, and from thence, in larger or smaller extracts, to several of our Provincial Journals. It was likewise reprinted in two of the American federalist papers: and a translation appeared, I have been told, in the *Hamburg Correspondent*.

\* The very idea of individual or private property, in our present acceptation of the term, and according to the current notion of the right to it, was originally confined to moveable things: and the more moveable, the more susceptible of the nature of property. Proceeding from the more to the less perfect right, we may bring all the objects of an independent ownership under five heads:—viz. 1, Precious stones, and other jewels, of as easy transfer: 2, The precious metals, and foreign coin taken as weight of metal; 3 Merchandise, by virtue of the contract between the importer and the sovereign in whose person the unity and integrity of the commonwealth were repre-

sented; i. e. after the settled price had been paid by the former for the permission to import, and received by the latter under the further obligation of protecting the same; 4, The coin of the country in the possession of the natural subjects; and last of all, and in certain cases, the live stock, the *peculium a pecude*. Hence, the minds of men were most familiar with the idea in the case of Jews and Aliens: till gradually the privileges attached to the vicinity of the Bishops and mitred Abbots prepared an asylum for the fugitive vassal and the oppressed Franklin, and thus laid the first foundations of a fourth class of freemen, that of citizens and burghers. To the feudal system we owe the forms, to the Church the substance of our liberty. As comment take, first, the origin of towns and cities; next, the holy war waged against slavery and villenage, and with such success that the law had barely to sanction an *opus jam consummatum* at the Restoration.

1. To make the means of subsistence more easy to each individual. 2. To secure to each of its members the hope\* of bettering his own condition or that of his children. 3. The development of those faculties which are essential to his humanity, *i. e.* to his rational and moral being. Under the last head we do not mean those degrees of intellectual cultivation which distinguish man from man in the same civilised society, but those only that raise the civilised man above the barbarian, the savage, and the animal. We require, however, on the part of the State, in behalf of all its members, not only the outward means of knowing their essential duties and dignities as men and free men, but likewise, and more especially, the discouragement of all such tenures and relations as must in the very nature of things render this knowledge inert, and cause the good seed to perish as it falls. Such at least is the appointed aim of a State: and at whatever distance from the ideal mark the existing circumstances of a nation may unhappily place the actual statesman, still every movement ought to be in this direction. But the negative merit of not forwarding—the exemption from the crime of necessitating—the debasement and virtual disfranchisement of any class of the community, may be demanded of every State under all circumstances: and the government that pleads difficulties in repulse or demur of this claim impeaches its own wisdom and fortitude. But as the specific ends of agriculture are the maintenance, strength, and security of the State, so (we repeat) must its ultimate ends be the same as those of the State: even as the ultimate end of the spring and wheels of a watch must be the same as that of the watch. Yet least of all things dare we overlook or conceal that, morally and with respect to the character and conscience of the individuals, the blame of unfaithful stewardship is aggravated in proportion as the difficulties are less and the consequences lying within a narrower field of vision are more evident and affecting. An injurious system, the connivance at which we scarcely dare more than regret in the cabinet or senate of an empire, may justify an earnest reprobation in the management of private estates: provided always, that the system only be denounced, and the pleadings confined to the court of conscience. For from this court only can the

\* The civilised man gives up those stimulants of hope and fear, the mixture or alternation of which constitutes the chief charm of the savage life: and yet his Maker has distinguished him from the brute that perishes, by making hope an instinct of his nature and an indispensable condition of his moral and intellectual progression. But a natural instinct

constitutes a natural right, as far as its gratification is compatible with the equal rights of others. Hence our ancestors classed those who were incapable of altering their condition from that of their parents, as bondsmen or villeins, however advantageously they might otherwise be situated.

redress be awarded. All reform or innovation, not won from the free agent by the presentation of juster views and nobler interests, and that does not leave the merit of having effected it sacred to the individual proprietor, it were folly to propose, and worse than folly to attempt. Madmen only would dream of digging or blowing up the foundation of a house in order to employ the materials in repairing the walls. Nothing more dare be asked of the State, no other duty is imposed on it, than to withhold or retract all extrinsic and artificial aids to an injurious system; or at the utmost to invalidate in extreme cases such claims as have arisen indirectly from the letter or unforeseen operations of particular statutes: claims that, instead of being contained in the rights of its proprietary, trustees are incroachments on its own rights, and a destructive trespass on a part of its own inalienable and untransferable property—I mean the health, strength, honesty, and filial love of its children.

It would border on an affront to the understandings of our landed interest, were I to explain in detail what the plan and conduct would be of a gentleman; \* if, as the result of his own free conviction, the marketable produce of his estates were made a subordinate consideration to the living and moral growth that is to remain on the land. I mean a healthful, callous-handed, but high and warm-hearted tenantry, twice the number of the present landless, parish-paid labourers, and ready to march off at the first call of their country with a son of the house at their head, because under no apprehension of being (forgive the lowness of the expression) marched off at the whisper of a land-taster! If the admitted rule, the paramount self-commandment, were comprised in the fixed resolve—I will improve my estate to the utmost; and my rent-roll I will raise as much as, but no more than, is compatible with the three great ends (before enumerated), which being those of my country must be mine inclusively! This, I repeat, it would be more than superfluous to particularise. It is a problem the solution of which may be safely entrusted to the common sense of every one who has the hardihood to ask himself the question. But how encouraging even the approximations to such a system, of what fair promise the few fragmentary samples are, may be seen in the Report of the Board of Agriculture for 1816,

\* Or (to put the question more justly as well as more candidly) of the land-owners collectively—for who is not aware of the facilities that accompany a conformity with the general practice, or of the numerous hindrances that retard, and the final imperfection that commonly awaits a deviation from

it? On the distinction mentioned overleaf between things and persons, all law, human and divine, is grounded. It consists in this: that the former may be used, as mere means; but the latter dare not be employed as the means to an end without directly or indirectly sharing in that end.

p. 11, from the Earl of Winchelsea's communication, in every paragraph of which wisdom seems to address us in behalf of goodness.

But the plan of my argument requires the reverse of this picture. I am to ask what the results would be, on the supposition that agriculture is carried on in the spirit of trade; and if the necessary answer coincide with the known general practice, to show the connection of the consequences with the present state of distress and uneasiness. In trade, from its most innocent form to the abomination of the African commerce, nominally abolished after a hard-fought battle of twenty years, no distinction is or can be acknowledged between things and persons. If the latter are part of the concern, they come under the denomination of the former. Two objects only can be proposed in the management of an estate, considered as a stock in trade—first, that the returns should be the largest, quickest, and securest possible; and secondly, with the least out-goings in the providing, overlooking, and collecting the same—whether it be expenditure of money paid for other men's time and attention, or of the tradesman's own, which are to him money's worth, makes no difference in the argument. Am I disposing of a bale of goods? The man whom I most love and esteem must yield to the stranger that outbids him; or if it be sold on credit, the highest price, with equal security, must have the preference. I may fill up the deficiency of my friend's offer by a private gift or loan; but as a tradesman, I am bound to regard honesty and established character themselves as things, as securities, for which the known unprincipled dealer may offer an unexceptionable substitute. Add to this that, the security being equal, I shall prefer, even at a considerable abatement of price, the man who will take a thousand chests or bales at once, to twenty who can pledge themselves only for fifty each. For I do not seek trouble for its own sake; but among other advantages I seek wealth for the sake of freeing myself more and more from the necessity of taking trouble in order to attain it. The personal worth of those, whom I benefit in the course of the process, or whether the persons are really benefited or no, is no concern of mine. The market and the shop are open to all. To introduce any other principle in trade, but that of obtaining the highest price with adequate security for articles fairly described, would be tantamount to the position that trade ought not to exist. If this be admitted, then, what as a tradesman I cannot do it cannot be my duty, as a tradesman, to attempt: and the only remaining question in reason or morality is—what are the proper

objects of trade? If my estate be such, my plan must be to make the most of it, as I would of any other mode of capital. As my rents will ultimately depend on the quantity and value of the produce raised and brought into the best market from my land, I will entrust the latter to those who, bidding the most, have the largest capital to employ on it: and this I cannot effect but by dividing it into the fewest tenures, as none but extensive farms will be an object to men of extensive capital and enterprising minds. I must prefer this system likewise for my own ease and security. The farmer is of course actuated by the same motives as the landlord: and, provided they are both faithful to their engagements, the objects of both will be: 1, the utmost produce that can be raised without injuring the estate; 2, with the least possible consumption of the produce on the estate itself; 3, at the lowest wages; and 4, with the substitution of machinery for human labour wherever the former will cost less and do the same work. What are the modest remedies proposed by the majority of correspondents in the last Report of the Board of Agriculture? Let measures be taken, that rents, taxes, and wages be lowered, and the markets raised! A great calamity has befallen us, from importation, the lessened purchases of government, and "the evil of a superabundant harvest"—of which we deem ourselves the more entitled to complain, because, "we had been long making 112 shillings per quarter of our corn," and of all other articles in proportion. As the best remedies for this calamity, we propose that we should pay less to our landlords, less to our labourers, nothing to our clergyman, and either nothing or very little to the maintenance of the government and of the poor; but that we should sell at our former prices to the consumer!—In almost every page we find deprecations of the poor laws: and I hold it impossible to exaggerate their pernicious tendency and consequences. But let it not be forgotten, that in agricultural districts three-fourths of the poor rates are paid to healthy, robust, and (O sorrow and shame!) industrious, hard-working paupers in lieu of wages (for men cannot at once work and starve): and therefore if there are twenty housekeepers in the parish, who are not holders of land, their contributions are so much bounty money to the latter. But the poor laws form a subject, which I should not undertake without trembling, had I the space of a whole volume to allot to it. Suffice, that this enormous mischief is undeniably the offspring of the commercial system. In the only plausible work, that I have seen, in favour of our poor laws on the present plan, the defence is grounded, first, on the expediency of having

labour cheap, and estates let out in the fewest possible portions—in other words, of large farms and low wages—each as indispensable to the other, and both conjointly as the only means of drawing capital to the land, by which alone the largest surplus is attainable for the State: that is, for the market, or in order that the smallest possible proportion of the largest possible produce may be consumed by the raisers and their families! secondly, on the impossibility of supplying, as we have supplied, all the countries of the civilised world (India perhaps and China excepted), and of underselling them even in their own markets, if our working manufacturers were not secured by the State against the worst consequences of those failures, stagnations, and transfers, to which the different branches of trade are exposed, in a greater or less degree, beyond all human prevention; or if the master manufacturers were compelled to give previous security for the maintenance of those whom they had, by the known law of human increase, virtually called into existence.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not myself admit this impossibility. I have already denied, and I now repeat the denial, that these are necessary consequences of our extended commerce. On the contrary, I feel assured that the spirit of commerce is itself capable of being at once counteracted and enlightened by the spirit of the State, to the advantage of both. But I do assert, that they are necessary consequences of the commercial spirit uncounteracted and unenlightened, wherever trade has been carried to so vast an extent as it has been in England. I assert too, historically and as matter of fact, that they have been the consequence of our commercial system. The laws of Lycurgus, like those of the inspired Hebrew Legislator, were anti-commercial: those of Solon and Numa were at least uncommercial. Now I ask myself, what the impression would have been on the Senate of the Roman or of the Athenian Republic, if the following proposal had been made to them and introduced by the following preamble. "Conscript Fathers (or Senators of Athens!), it is well known to you, that circumstances being the same and the time allowed proportional, the human animal may be made to multiply as easily, and at as small an expense, as your sheep or swine: which is meant, perhaps, in the fiction of our philosophers, that souls are out of all proportion more numerous than the bodies, in which they can subsist and be manifested. It is likewise known to you, Fathers! that though in various states various checks have been ordained to prevent this increase of births from becoming such as should frustrate or greatly endanger the ends for which freemen are



born, yet the most efficient limit must be sought for in the moral and intellectual prerogatives of men, in their foresight, in their habituation to the comforts and decencies of society, in the pride of independence; but above all in the hope that enables men to withstand the tyranny of the present impulse, and in their expectation of honour or discredit from the rank, character, and condition of their children. Now there are proposed to us the speedy means of at once increasing the number of the rich, the wealth of those that are already such, and the revenues of the State: and the latter, Fathers! to so vast an amount, that we shall be able to pay not only our own soldiers but those of the monarchs whom we may thus induce to become our allies. But for this it will be requisite and indispensable that all men of enterprise and sufficiency among us should be permitted, without restraint, to encourage, and virtually to occasion, the birth of many myriads of free citizens, who from their childhood are to be amassed in clusters and employed as parts of a mighty system of machinery. While all things prove answerable to the schemes and wishes of these enterprisers, the citizens thus raised and thus employed by them will find an ample maintenance, except in such instances where the individual may have rendered himself useless by the effects of his own vices. It dare not, however, be disguised from you, that the nature of the employments and the circumstances to which these citizens will be exposed, will often greatly tend to render them intemperate, diseased, and restless. Nor has it been yet made a part of the proposal, that the employers should be under any bond to counteract such injurious circumstances by education, discipline, or other efficient regulations. Still less may it be withheld from your knowledge, O Fathers of the State, that should events hereafter prove hostile to all or to any branch of these speculations, to many or to any one of the number that shall have devoted their wealth to the realisation of the same—and the light, in which alone they can thrive, is confessedly subject to partial and even to total eclipses, which there are no means of precisely foretelling! the guardian planets, to whose conjunction their success is fatally linked, will at uncertain periods, for a longer or shorter time, act in malignant oppositions!—Then, Fathers, the principals are to shift for themselves, and leave the disposal of the calamitous, and therefore too probably turbulent, multitude, now unemployed and useless, to the mercy of the community, and the solicitude of the State: or else to famine, violence, and the vengeance of the laws!"

If, on the maxims of ancient prudence, on the one hand not

enlightened, on the other not dazzled, by the principles of trade, the immediate answer would have been: "We should deem it danger and detriment, were we to permit so indefinite and improvident increase even of our slaves and helots: in the case of free citizens, our countrymen, who are to swear to the same laws, and worship at the same altars, it were profanation! May the gods avert the omen!" If this, I say, would have been their rescript, it may be safely concluded, that the connivance at the same scheme, much more that the direct encouragement of it, must be attributed to that spirit which the ancients did not recognise, namely, the spirit of commerce.

But we have shewn that the same system has gradually taken possession of our agriculture. What have been the results? For him who is either unable or unwilling to deduce the whole truth from the portion of it revealed in the following extract from Lord Winchelsea's Report, whatever I could have added would have been equally in vain. His Lordship speaking of the causes which oppose all attempts to better the labourer's condition, mentions, as one great cause, the dislike the generality of farmers have to seeing the labourers rent any land. Perhaps (he continues) "one of the reasons for their disliking this is, that the land, if not occupied by the labourers, would fall to their own share; and another I am afraid is, that they rather wish to have the labourers more dependent upon them; for which reasons they are always desirous of hiring the house and land occupied by a labourer, under pretence, that by that means the landlord will be secure of his rent, and that they will keep the house in repair. This the agents of estates are too apt to give into, as they find it much less trouble to meet six than sixty tenants at a rent-day, and by this means avoid the being sometimes obliged to hear the wants and complaints of the poor. All parties therefore join in persuading the landlord, who it is natural to suppose (unless he has time and inclination to investigate the matter very closely) will agree to this their plan, from the manner in which it comes recommended to him: and it is in this manner that the labourers have been dispossessed of their cow-pastures in various parts of the midland counties. The moment the farmer obtains his wish, he takes every particle of the land to himself, and re-lets the house to the labourer, who by this means is rendered miserable; the poor rate increased: the value of the estate to the landowner diminished; and the house suffered to go to decay; which once fallen the tenant will never rebuild, but the landlord must, at a considerable expense. Whoever travels through the midland

counties, and will take the trouble of inquiring, will generally receive for answer, that formerly there were a great many cottagers who kept cows, but that the land is now thrown to the farmers; and if he inquires still further, he will find that in those parishes the poor rates have increased in an amazing degree, more than according to the average rise throughout England."—In confirmation of his Lordship's statement I find in the Agricultural Reports, that the county, in which I read of nothing but farms of 1000, 1500, 2000, and 2500 acres, is likewise that in which the poor rates are most numerous, the distresses of the poor most grievous, and the prevalence of revolutionary principles the most alarming. But if we consider the subject on the largest scale and nationally, the consequences are, that the most important rounds in the social ladder are broken, and the hope, which above all other things distinguishes the free man from the slave, is extinguished. The peasantry therefore are eager to have their children add as early as possible to their wretched pittance, by letting them out to manufactories; while the youths take every opportunity of escaping to towns and cities. And if I were questioned as to my opinion respecting the ultimate cause of our liability to distresses like the present, the cause of what has been called a vicious (*i. e.* excessive) population, with all the furies that follow in its train—in short, of a state of things so remote from the simplicity of nature, that we have almost deprived Heaven itself of the power of blessing us; a state in which, without absurdity, a superabundant harvest can be complained of as an evil, and the recurrence of the same a ruinous calamity—I should not hesitate to answer—the vast and disproportionate number of men who are to be fed from the produce of the fields on which they do not labour.

What then is the remedy? Who the physicians? The reply may be anticipated. An evil, which has come on gradually, and in the growth of which all men have more or less conspired, cannot be removed otherwise than gradually, and by the joint efforts of all. If we are a Christian nation, we must learn to act nationally, as well as individually, as Christians. We must remove half-truths, the most dangerous of errors (as those of the poor visionaries called Spenceans) by the whole truth. The government is employed already in retrenchments; but he who expects immediate relief from these, or who does not even know that, if they do anything at all, they must for a time tend to aggravate the distress, cannot have studied the operation of public expenditure.

I am persuaded that more good would be done, not only ultimate

and permanent, but immediate good, by the abolition of the lotteries, accompanied with a public and parliamentary declaration of the moral and religious grounds that had determined the legislature to this act; of their humble confidence in the blessing of God on the measure; and of their hopes that this sacrifice to principle, as being more exemplary from the present pressure on the revenue of the State, would be the more effective in restoring confidence between man and man—I am deeply convinced, that more sterling and visible benefits would be derived from this one solemn proof and pledge of moral fortitude and national faith than from retrenchments to a tenfold greater amount. Still more, if our legislators should pledge themselves at the same time that they would hereafter take counsel for the gradual removal or counteraction of all similar encouragements and temptations to vice and folly, that had alas! been tolerated hitherto, as the easiest way of supplying the exchequer. And truly, the financial motives would be strong, indeed, if the revenue laws in question were but half as productive of money to the State as they are of guilt and wretchedness to the people.

Our manufacturers must consent to regulations; our gentry must concern themselves in the education as well as in the instruction of their natural clients and dependents—must regard their estates as secured indeed from all human interference by every principle of law and policy, but yet as offices of trust with duties to be performed, in the sight of God and their country. Let us become a better people, and the reform of all the public (real or supposed) grievances, which we use as pegs whereon to hang our own errors and defects, will follow of itself. In short, let every man measure his efforts by his power and his sphere of action, and do all he can do! Let him contribute money where he cannot act personally; but let him act personally and in detail wherever it is practicable. Let us palliate where we cannot cure, comfort where we cannot relieve; and for the rest rely upon the promise of the King of kings by the mouth of His Prophet—“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.”

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